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A Few Words Concerning the Care of the Skin and Complexion.

REPRINTED FROM A "HEALTH LECTURE," BY THE COURTEOUS PERMISSION OF THE LECTURER, DR. ANDREW WILSON.

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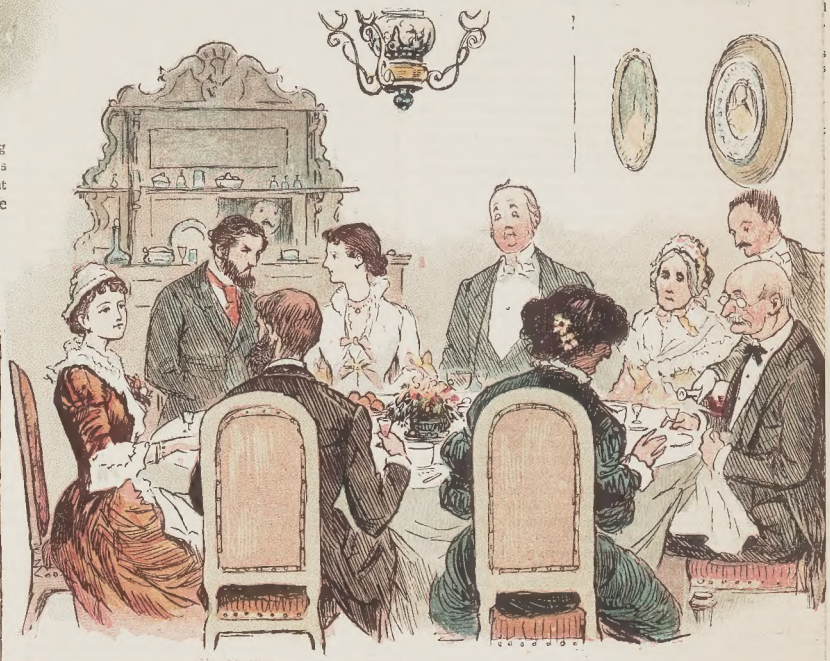
PERHAPS there are few subjects of greater interest and importance in the matter of health than the proper care and treatment of the skin. The importance of the subject stands in inverse ratio to the attention we are popularly inclined to pay it. I make bold to say few persons are aware of the prominent part played by the skin in the maintenance of health, whilst still fewer appreciate the functions of the skin and the duties it is intended by Nature to discharge in the human economy. Whoever said "Cleanliness is next to godliness"—a sentence so valuable that one can hardly wonder at the common idea that it occurs amongst the wisdom of "Proverbs"—must have been a wise man in his day and generation. For it is easy to show that the beginning and the end of a large part of our health exists in the proper care of the skin, and in its freedom from the "sanctity of dirt," a condition extremely prevalent in bygone days. Perhaps the most satisfactory way of opening up to-night the subject of the skin and its functions will be, firstly, to investigate the structure of the skin; then, secondly, to note the duties or functions it performs; and, thirdly, to briefly investigate those common details of skin-management which should be practised by all. The human skin is composed of two chief layers—I have heard ignorant persons credit the race with the possession of three or even four "skins." The outer skin, or *epidermis*, or "scarf skin," consists of layers of minute bodies called *cells*. Nearest the surface these cells are mere microscopic scales, measuring each about $\frac{1}{1000}$th of an inch in breadth. Below, the cells are large, and less scale-like. Hundreds of the upper scales must be given off daily as used-up elements of the skin from all parts of the body, being worn off by the friction of our clothes, and by the act of washing. These cells are, however, being perpetually renewed from below. The outer skin is, in fact, a growth from the under skin, and it is just when the outer and under layers of the skin join that the colour of the skin is developed. The under-skin, or *dermis*, is a very different layer from the epidermis. The latter has no nerves nor blood-vessels; whilst the dermis is so thickly supplied with both, that we cannot prick any part of the body with the finest needle without drawing blood and feeling pain. In shaving, we draw a practical and necessary distinction between the non-sensitive epidermis and the sensitive under-layer. The dermis or under skin rests in its turn on the fat and cellular tissue of the body. It is composed of tolerably tough fibres, and it is well supplied with blood-vessels. Again, the delicate twigs of the nerves end in the under skin, and are found inside certain little projections called *papillæ*. When I touch this table, for example, I feel it through the outer skin, by means of the nerves and papillæ of the under skin. These papillæ are most abundant on the palms of the hands and fingers and on the soles of the feet. Such a fact might have been inferred from the sensitiveness of these parts. When we magnify the skin, say of the palm of the hand, we can readily see the raised lines, each composed of a double row of papillæ. A papillæ measures about the $\frac{1}{100}$th of an inch in length, and $\frac{1}{250}$th of an inch in diameter at the base. Within each papillæ is a network of blood-vessels and a nerve fibre, which may, however, end in various ways. The skin has two sets of glands associated with it. Deep down in the skin and below the true skin, the microscope shows us in a section of this membrane numerous little coiled-up tubes. From each coil there ascends to the surface of the skin the end of the tube. This ends in a skin pore. The coil is the *sweat-gland*, and the tube is its duct, whereby the sweat is poured forth on the skin-surface. These glands are most numerous in the palms and soles. Over 2,700, according to one author, exist to the square inch in the palm of the hand; whilst over 3,500 are calculated by Sir Erasmus Wilson to exist per square inch in the same situation. In the neck and back, the sweat-glands are least numerous. There, they do not average more than 400 or so to the square inch. In the whole body, the total number of sweat-glands has been set down at nearly two millions and a half; and it has been calculated that if the glands were uncoiled, and extended one after the other in a straight line, we should find that there were twenty-eight miles of sweat-tubes in the body. In addition to the sweat-glands, we find certain other glands, called *sebaceous glands*, in the skin. These latter are most abundant on hairy parts, and are wanting in the regions where the sweat-glands are thickest. They appear to pour out on the skin-surface an oily fluid, and frequently open into the sheaths of hairs. Hence we conclude their function is connected with the nourishment of the hair.

So much for the structure of the skin. Now the uses of this membrane may be briefly summed up by saying that, firstly, it serves as a protective membrane to the body; secondly, it regulates the temperature of the blood, through its presenting a large surface to the outer air; thirdly, it serves to get rid of waste matters; and, fourthly, it acts as an organ of touch, and stands thus as a means of communication between ourselves and the external world. It is specially with the second and third of these uses that we have to concern ourselves to-night. We know by experience that "catching a cold" is, unfortunately, only a too easy matter; but few persons reflect upon the share which the skin, through ignorance and carelessness, is made to play in the process. When we allow a chill to affect the skin, especially when its blood-vessels are full of blood, as they are after exertion, and when its glands are actively discharging their secretion, a peculiar influence passes to the nerves of the skin; this influence is propagated inwards, comes to affect the lining membrane of the nose and throat, or the lungs themselves, and then succeeds the "cold in the head," or in the chest, as the case may be. Hence one of the great rules of health must consist in our care of the skin surface. We must guard against chills, and undue exposure, if we are to keep free from colds and coughs. For a cold, as a rule, is the physiological penalty that follows neglect of the skin, and the too sudden change from a heated atmosphere—itself an insanitary condition—to a cooler one. The functions of the skin as an organ of excretion—that is, for getting rid of waste matters—correspond to those of the lungs and kidneys. Skin, lungs, and kidneys form, in fact, a kind of physiological trio, performing essentially the same work—namely, that of eliminating from our bodies the waste matters which inevitably attend every act and process of living and being. What, you may ask, are the waste matters got rid of by the skin? I reply, chiefly heat, water, carbonic acid gas, minerals, and small quantities of other matters. You may have little idea how complex a fluid sweat is. In 1000 parts, sweat, when analysed, is found to consist of 995 parts of water and 5 parts of solids. The latter consist of complex organic acids, minerals (chiefly common salt), fats, and skin *debris*. Of water, the skin of an adult gets rid of between 1½ lb. and 2 lb. daily. And if you ask me where these waste matters come from, I reply from the blood, which is the great source at once of nourishment and of waste in the living organism. The sweat-glands, we should remember, are always acting. Not that we are always sensible of perspiring; but, as a matter of fact, we are continually performing that process. The healthy skin is a moderately moist skin, and contrasts very markedly with the dry skin of the fever patient, or of the unhealthy person. How, then, it may be asked, do the sweat-glands contrive to separate these waste matters from the blood? Their action may readily be understood. Each sweat-gland, as we have seen, is a coiled-up tube. Outside the glands is a dense network of blood-vessels. Hence the waste matters in the blood are separated from the inside of the sweat-gland by what?—only by the thin wall of the blood-vessel, and the equally thin wall of the air-tube. In virtue of certain laws regulating the passage of fluids and gases through thin membranes, we accordingly find that the watery constituents of the blood, the carbonic acid gas, and other matters, strain or transude through the walls of the blood-vessels and through those of the sweat-glands. Thence the sweat passes upwards to be exuded through the pores on the skin-surface. A similar process of filtering waste matters from the blood into the interior of a tube occurs in the kidney. Summing up the work of the skin, I may add that in twenty-four hours a healthy adult will excrete from the skin about 18 oz. of water, about 300 gr. of solid matters, and about 400 gr. of carbonic acid gas.

The care of the skin is a matter to which, as I have already remarked, few persons pay that meed of attention the subject demands. In the first place, the necessity for frequently and thoroughly cleansing the skin—the absolute necessity, I would say, for hot or tepid baths—is clearly demonstrated, when you reflect that every day the scarf-skin is throwing off its old cells, that every hour the invisible perspiration is collecting on the skin-surface, and that our clothing, however clean, is likewise liable to retard the free action of this membrane. Whoever can promote the erection of baths in the populous districts of our great cities, and encourage their frequent use by all classes of society, will prove himself a public benefactor and a health-reformer of no mean power. The cold bath is a stimulant valuable as inuring us to cold, and as guarding and bracing us against the effects of chill. But the true cleanser is a hot bath, and only under the efficient action of hot water can the skin be made to part with its refuse-matter. One important caution should here be given, and that is one concerning the use of soaps. I would strongly advise all who care for their skin to eschew the use of the common yellow soap, which, with its excess of alkali, simply roughens and injures the skin. Likewise, if you will be advised by me, I would say never buy those odoriferous abominations commonly sold under the name of "Scented or Fancy Soaps." Loaded, as chemists tell us, with colouring matters, and reeking with bad oils, they possess neither cleansing nor emollient properties, and they are the frequent causes of skin eruptions. If I am to recommend any soap at all to you, as a satisfactory and scientifically prepared article, I would certainly advise you to buy and use Pears' Soap. Not merely from personal use can I recommend this soap, but I am well content to shelter myself under the names and authority of Sir Erasmus Wilson, President of the Royal College of Surgeons, of Dr. Stevenson Macadam, Professors Redwood and Attfield, and of other well-known physicians and chemists, who declare that Pears' Soap contains no colouring matter whatever, and that it is a pure soap, well calculated to cleanse and purify the skin. Furthermore, I believe economical people will find this soap very much to their taste. It contains little or no water, and in this respect differs from all other soaps; hence a cake of Pears' is really soap *in toto*, and not so much oil, alkali, and colouring matter plus a mass of water. I know of cases of irritable skin which the whole tribe of "glycerine soaps" failed to allay, but which disappeared under the use of Pears' Soap; and for the nursery and for the delicate skin of infancy, no better or more soothing soap can be used. There can be no doubt that in respect of the care of children, attention to the skin is specially required. Of necessity, also, the nature of the applications we bring in contact with the delicate skin of infancy becomes a topic of importance to mothers and nurses. If common soaps are irritating to the skin of the adult, as they unquestionably are, they are doubly and trebly injurious to the delicate skin of the infant and young child. I can vouch, from the testimony of intelligent mothers, that the Soap I am recommending is not merely a safe but an advantageous one for the nursery. It does not irritate the skin; but, whilst serving as a detergent and cleanser, also acts as an emollient. The care of the complexion is, of course, a wide topic, and one which concerns us all; but I should like to warn you that there is no one sovereign remedy for a clear skin, no panacea for rendering the complexion healthy. What will do so, however, is attention to the general health. Moderate and, above all, temperate living, and especially in the matter of stimulants; an avoidance of rich and over-nutritious foods; the eschewing of beer in particular, and of other malt liquors where any tendency to skin troubles exists; and frequent baths with the use of a pure soap, such as that I have recommended—these are the great rules for the healthy skin. For, as an unhealthy skin is an indication of general ill-health, so the care of the general heath, conversely, is the best conducive to the health of the body-covering. One of the things we are apt to grumble at in France is the providing of one's own soap at hotels. Permit me to remark that this is one of those things "they manage better in France" than we do here. I am strongly of opinion that everyone should in travelling carry his or her own soap with them, as you carry your own hair-brushes, or your own sponge. There can be no better providing in this respect for the hot sun and the warm winds and dust of travel than a cake or two of "Pears," which, under such circumstances, I have found very efficient in the prevention of sunburn and allied annoyances.

MR. OAKBALL'S WINTER IN FLORENCE

IN DECEMBER WE FOUND OAKBALL lolling on a bridge over the Arno. To overcome lowness of spirits and improve his appetite his mother had sent him alone to try the light climate and interesting life of Florence.



So we got him to meet
few pleasant and intellectual peop
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Then we tried the paintin
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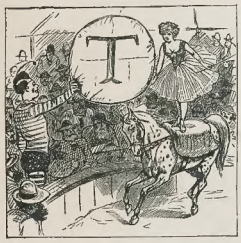
wicked. They did not cheer hi
however.

Dr. Todd's Christmas Box

BY FRANCES E. TROLLOPE

Author of "Aunt Margaret's Trouble," "A Charming Fellow," "Among Aliens," &c., &c.

I.



THE village of Gorsham consisted of one nearly straight street, stretching from the gates of Gorsham House, eastward; that is to say, in the direction of Chardington. And the full and proper appellation of the village was Gorsham Street.

Any one going from Chardington to Gorsham House, or *vice versâ*, must pass through the village. As Chardington was the nearest town of any importance, with a Cathedral, and a garrison, and a railway station, this circumstance was highly agreeable to the inhabitants of Gorsham Street, who watched the doings at Gorsham House with vigilant interest. It was the most important gentleman's residence near the village. Squire Travis was the owner of it. And the Travises had lived there for more than two centuries; generation after generation of ruddy country squires who had constantly tempered their too copious libations of port wine or strong ale with healthful draughts of fresh air, winter and summer. Its present occupants were only an old couple with their grand-daughter, a girl of sixteen. The place was usually very hushed and quiet; altogether different from what it had been within the memory of many Gorsham folk. In the old times the House (as the Travises' place was called *par excellence* in the village) had been full of life and gaiety. Squire Travis and his wife had married young, and the latter was pleased to be told that she looked more like the sister of her tall blooming son and daughter than their mother. And the compliment was not so extravagant in her case as in many. She was a pretty, pink-and-white, soft-eyed woman, who was perfectly sound and healthy, despite her delicate appearance. The son and daughter were "thoroughbred Travises," as their father was wont proudly to declare,—tall, robust, rosy-cheeked, and with bright blue eyes and bright golden-brown hair. A handsomer family you could not find in all the Midland counties; nor a healthier, nor a happier. But all this was not to last. Jack Travis—the Travises had been "Jack" from father to son for generations—went to Oxford in due course, and did pretty well there. He made some debts, and distinguished himself as a cricketer and an oarsman, and forgot nearly all the little Greek and Latin that had been thrashed into him at school. Altogether his father was not dissatisfied with his University career; Jack had rowed stroke in his College boat, and had never done a mean or dirty action. Squire Travis belonged to a breed of men peculiarly English. He was proud of his genealogy of country gentlemen, with a shy and silent pride which sufficed to itself. There was nothing rich or fashionable at Gorsham House. The Travis lands and revenues had not grown with the growth of modern expense and modern requirements. And the income, which had made the Squires of Gorsham wealthy to all intents and purposes a hundred years ago, only sufficed to give their present representative the status of a gentleman farmer of limited means. The *income* only sufficed for this; but there were other claims to consideration—notably the genealogical tree on yellow parchment hanging in the hall—which made John Travis, Esquire, of Gorsham, consider himself the superior of most of his rich neighbours. However, as he kept his pride to himself, it did his neighbours no hurt. They, for the most part, suspected it not, and bestowed a good deal of compassion on "the poor Travises," who never had a season in town, nor a winter in Italy, nor went up the Nile, nor cruised round the world, nor hired a shooting-box in the Highlands, nor owned yachts, nor thousand guinea portraits of themselves, nor furniture covered with antique lace, nor walls painted over with peacocks and sunflowers and hollyhocks. For all these toys put together, Squire Travis would not have bartered one generation of his long descent The intensity of his pride was in a direct ratio to its shy reticence.

To this man, living apart from the great world, and having learned none of the lessons arising from friction and competition with his kind, the news came one day that his only son, the heir of his old and honoured name, had married a woman of low origin and vagabond life: a dancer at a vulgar transpontine theatre in London, where Jack had been spending part of the Long Vacation. It fell on Gorsham House more terribly and far more ruinously than if a thunderbolt had destroyed all the old trees in the avenue and the rich ricks garnered in the yard, and the stout weatherbeaten stone house itself, where so many Travises had seen their first and their last glimpse of daylight. It scathed and blackened a whole inward and spiritual world for John Travis, and he was never more the same man he had been.

At the first shock of the tidings he had hurried up to London, hoping against hope that the thing might not be irrevocable; or that, even if irrevocable, it might not be so bad as had been feared. But it was as bad as bad could be, according to the country Squire's judgment. And after one dreadful interview with his son, when the hot blood that ran in the veins of both alike had flamed out in bitter violent words, and when in his blind misery and rage the father had aimed a blow at the tall, stalwart young fellow before him, white with grief and fury, John Travis, the owner, and John Travis, the heir, of Gorsham, had parted, never more to meet on this side eternity. The last glimpse the Squire had of his son showed a frightened crying woman, with a dishevelled shock of fair hair, clinging round him, and stammering out, "No, Jack! No, Jack! He's your father!"

Sixteen years had passed since that day. Susy, his blithe-faced handsome daughter, who had already been a wife when her brother married, had become a mother and a widow, and had herself died out in India, leaving her little orphan girl to its grandparents' care. His old friends had grown older, his young friends had become middle-aged men and women, and the little children had outgrown childhood. Seed-time and harvest had come round again and again. Nature in the beauty of her appointed cycles had made the old trees at Gorsham bud, and put forth leaves, and grow moist and green in June, and die again in October brave with bronze and crimson—like the close of a fair day, and of a noble life flushed with sunset glories that are a promise as much as a farewell—but the warmth and glow of the old days came back to John Travis no more, and the Squire of Gorsham was a changed man.

Bitter as had been the parents' mortification, and deep as had been the wound to their affection for their son, yet after some years there might have been something like reconciliation if "Jack" would have sought it. But Jack never did. There is no more terrible form of visiting the sins of the fathers on the children than the reproduction of our own faults in our offspring. The pride—the silent, stubborn, self-worshipping pride—of the Travises was in Jack as well as in his father. And it kept him silent and aloof even when his heart was yearning for peace and forgiveness. Moreover, he had placed the ocean between himself and his old home. He joined a poor company of second-rate players and pantomimists, among whom his wife had already been employed, and who were engaged by a Transatlantic speculator to make a tour in the wilder and more outlying parts of the New World; to amuse the gold-diggers of Australia and California, and the rough drovers, farmers, and settlers in the West. His father learned all these particulars by degrees, having secretly employed more than one agent to get news. Then there came a blank time of ignorance. Then Jack Travis and his family reappeared in a big Western city, like human flotsam and jetsam on the rough tide of life. And then the tidings came that put an end to more than one hope nursed secretly in the proud stoical English heart of the father—Jack was dead! Jack Travis the strong, handsome, well-nurtured, blooming young fellow, who should have succeeded to the old place and the old name, and put up another monument in the parish church of Gorsham, and reverently stood by turfy graves in the picturesque enclosure where John and his wife, Susan, looked to sleep side by side,—Jack Travis was gone before; dead and buried in a strange land, cut down by yellow fever in New Orleans, and Gorsham would know him no more. "If it had only been the woman!" thought Squire Travis. "The baleful creature that ruined his life—and mine!" But there were children, too, two little girls. And what was to become of them now? He gave orders to his lawyer in London to send assistance to the widow: —assistance in money—not a word of kindness or comfort. If it had not been for her, Jack would have been healthy and happy on his native acres. And the Squire hated her and pitied her with a tangled mixture of feelings which no one was less able to unravel than himself. But hatred was—if not extinguished—hushed into silence by the receipt of a letter from New Orleans some months later. Jack's widow and children were swept away also by the terrible pestilence which had ravaged New Orleans that sultry summer with unwonted virulence. Part of the money sent had been applied to giving them decent burial. The rest, said the writer (a benevolent doctor of the place to whom the agent of Travis's lawyer had applied for information), should be returned. The poor things had been known in New Orleans under a feigned name. The next mail took out injunctions to the good doctor to keep the remainder of the sum, and expend it for the benefit of the sick poor. As for Squire Travis and his wife, the waters of affliction had gone over their souls. They clung to, and comforted each other. And they agreed in keeping a brave front to the world. But the blow had been too overwhelming to be entirely recovered from. More than seven years had passed since Jack's death, when our story opens. And in all that time his name had never passed his father's lips, except in some rare moment of confidence with his wife. The people of the village, his friends, and neighbours, knew very little of the tragical story. Jack had made a foolish marriage, and emigrated, and died in America. That was the sum-total known to most people. Only one man in Gorsham Street was pretty well acquainted with the truth—old Dr. Todd, who had brought Jack Travis into the world, and had been a friend of the family when the present Squire was a lad.

The good folks of Gorsham saw that the Squire, though white-haired, like a man of eighty, was still strong and ruddy (being, indeed, little over three-score years old), and Madam was sweet-looking and kind—though maybe a little more dull and indifferent in her ways than formerly—and Gorsham lived its own life, deep or shallow, and could only judge its neighbours' lives by the surface.

II.

BESIDES the Rectory House, now occupied by Mr. Dobson, the bachelor curate in charge, there were one or two other good dwellings in the village of Gorsham Street, that were neither shops nor public houses. The smartest of these was a detached house, standing in its own grounds, and called Ivy Lodge. It was occupied by a Mr. Blake, who had been a solicitor in good practice in Chardington. His first wife, by whom he had one son, had been a Travis, a cousin of the present Squire. His second wife was the daughter of a steel pen manufacturer in Birmingham, and had brought him a handsome dowry. Her income, added to his own, made him, for his class and position, a rich man; and he soon retired from the practice of the law. There were two sons born of this second marriage, and their elder half-brother was still an inmate of the home, although he purposed shortly leaving it for London to enter himself at the Middle Temple.

The garden of Ivy Lodge was neat and trim. It had the smoothest of gravel paths, and the brightest of green lawns, with kaleidoscope patterns of crimson and scarlet and yellow flowers disposed on them symmetrically. A wire fence divided the garden from a series of meadows beyond, and these meadows with their hedgerow elms made a fair and pleasant prospect from the windows of the house. The house itself, although it had no pretensions to antiquity, was yet old enough to be richly draped with ivy and other creeping plants, and to have got its red brick surface weather-tinted into mellowness of colour.

On one special Sunday afternoon, early in November, the air was mild and pleasant, despite the advanced period of the year. A sound of bells came in soft wafts from the church some quarter of a mile away. Sheep were bleating in the meadows, and rooks cawing their noisy vespers from a distant group of elms. No other sound broke the peaceful stillness. The pretty trim garden held no human occupant to be pleased with the pleasantness of the place and hour. Neither was any one to be seen in the meadows, or in the little shrubbery of glossy evergreens which masked the offices and stables, and skirted the drive, or in the kitchen garden. But a sound of voices came from behind a wall that bounded a gravelled courtyard. In the courtyard stood a pump and a tool-house, and a long shed which held a cart and a couple of wheelbarrows; under the shelter of the shed stood also a row of heterogeneous boxes—mostly old tea-chests set on end—arranged so as to form more or less commodious dwellings for a colony of rabbits and guinea-pigs. And in front of these boxes was gathered a group of young persons who found the spectacle of the rabbits nibbling at their carrots more interesting than the crimson sunset flush above the elm trees, or the blue haze of an autumn evening stealing across the meadows.

These were two little boys, a young man, and a girl. The latter was a straight, slim, bright-eyed maiden, with a mass of shining brown plaits fastened tightly at the back of her head, and the hair smoothed away from a clear, ingenuous forehead. This was Harriet—invariably called Hatty—Harrington, Mr. Travis's grand-daughter. She was leaning forward in an attitude of eager attention, more expressive than graceful, with the palms of her hands on her knees, and her body bent down to look at the rabbits. Beside her knelt two little boys, aged respectively ten and twelve, ruthlessly grinding the knees of their trousers into the dusty fragments of chopped straw and fusty hay strewn over the flooring of the shed. They were eagerly discussing the proper allowance of carrot to be doled out to each individual rabbit and guinea-pig; and, in default of articulate eloquence, occasionally enforcing their arguments by a vigorous push, or a lively scuffle. Behind them, and towering in stature over the whole group, stood a young fellow in riding boots, a good deal splashed with mud. His cheek, just beginning to be shaded by a downy foreshadowing of beard, glowed with healthy colour, and his whole appearance bespoke him one who lived an out-of-doors life, and was saturated with fresh air. Despite the superiority of his twenty-two years, he was as much interested in the rabbits as were the younger members of the party, and was evidently looked up to by the little boys as a reverend authority on all points connected with the breeding, rearing, and feeding of those interesting animals. It may as well be stated at once that this youth formed no part of the Blake family, but was a country neighbour, by name Royston Finch, of Marby, whose home lay a couple of miles nearer to Chardington than Gorsham Street. Mr. Blake had been an executor under the late Mr. Finch's will; and Royston's guardian until he came of age. And the young fellow was as much at home in Ivy Lodge as in his own house.

"I say, Roy," cried the younger boy, in a shrill treble, "oughtn't my grey lop-ear to have another bit now? Basil's been feeding his black and white three times to my once. And it's the greediest brute—it'll eat your fingers if you'll let it!"

"As to that, old fellow," retorted Basil, dexterously snatching a piece of carrot from his brother, and poking it over his head between the wooden bars of his own rabbit-hutch, "your lop-ear is about the beastliest beggar to gorge I ever saw."

Harry replied by a push in his brother's ribs, administered with such enthusiasm that he over-balanced himself and tumbled sideways over Basil, upsetting him, carrots and all, into a dusty heap of straw.

"Come now, don't you fight, you boys," said the young lady, reprovingly.

Basil had by this time got little Harry's head down amongst the straw, and the two were rolling and kicking, clutched in a convulsive embrace, and emitting half-stifled squeaks and roars, mingled with laughter.

"Halloa! Hold hard there, my hearties!" cried young Finch; and at the word he pulled Harry by main force from off the ground. That young gentleman came up gasping and choking and grinning with a crimson countenance, and thickly powdered from head to foot with fragments of straw and hay, pigeons' feathers, and the general litter of the cart-shed.

"I say," exclaimed Basil, scrambling to his feet in his turn, "Harry looks as if he'd been tarred and feathered. *Won't* you catch it when Nurse Farmer sees your new jacket and trousers, that's all!"

"Don't *you* talk," returned Harry, wiping his hot face with his handkerchief. "You can't see yourself behind."

Basil instinctively turned his head over his shoulder in an attempt to accomplish that impossible feat, and the action was greeted by a simultaneous burst of laughter from the three others—Harry, in his ecstasy, throwing himself backwards again into the heap of straw, and clapping his heels together in the air.

In the midst of the tumult of young voices was heard another voice, also young, but not childish; grave, with a tone of polite reproof in it; saying, "Miss Harrington, my mother fears you will catch cold, and thinks you had better come in. I have brought a shawl."

There fell a sudden hush on the little party. Harry and Basil looked very much as if an unexpected douche of cold water had quenched the ardour of their spirits; and a deeper colour flushed into Royston Finch's ruddy cheeks.

"How d'ye do, Finch?" said the new comer, shaking hands with him.

"How d'ye do?" returned the other, a little sheepishly; and then added the superfluous piece of information, "We were feeding the rabbits."

Mr. Evelyn Blake—for he it was—turned a look of cool disgust on his younger brothers. "What a spectacle those boys present!" said he, looking at them, and speaking of them as though they were unpleasant little animals who did not understand what was said.

"A good brushing will cure that," said Royston, good-naturedly, compassionating the children's crestfallen air.

"Oh, I should not concern myself about it in general," returned Evelyn, still with the same look of cool disgust. "Piggery is their normal state. Only this evening, being Sunday, we shall have the honour of their company to tea; and I hope, for Miss Harrington's

sake, that they will contrive to go through some cleansing process before appearing in the dining-room."

Miss Harrington upon this began to laugh, and then checked herself.

"I am sorry you should have been dragged out to this place," pursued Evelyn, addressing her. "It is really too bad of those boys to keep you here in the evening damp. Mrs. Blake was quite distressed. Pray put on this shawl."

"Oh, I wasn't dragged here at all. And I like watching the rabbits very much," answered Hatty. Then she meekly allowed herself to be muffled in a thick fleecy shawl, and was led away captive on the arm of Mr. Evelyn Blake, who marched beside her, grave, erect, and polite behind his faultless white cravat. When he had gone a few paces, he turned his head and said, speaking over his shoulder, "I shall see you again, Finch."

"I think not, thank you," returned Royston Finch, rather brusquely. "I'm scarcely in better trim to enter Mrs. Blake's drawing-room than the boys are." But Evelyn and his companion were almost out of earshot before the speech was finished.

Basil and Harry stood looking after them for a few seconds in discomfited silence. Then little Harry, with an imitation of Evelyn's manner made all the more ludicrous by his own eminently wild and untidy appearance, said to his brother, "I hope, for Miss Harrington's sake, that you will—haw!—go through some cleansing process—haw!" and made him a low bow. Basil returned the bow with

Little Harry, with an imitation of Evelyn's manner, made Basil a low bow.

immense ceremony, and they approached each other bowing lower and lower, until they knocked their heads together; whereupon they relieved their feelings by a wild whooping and a brisk skirmish in the straw for the scattered carrots. After that, they rushed off, Harry first, and Basil in hot pursuit, to their nursery, which was luckily in a remote back portion of the premises, where they resigned themselves to Mrs. Farmer's severe administration of soapsuds and scolding.

Royston Finch, left alone, remained for a few moments in front of the rabbit-hutches, staring thoughtfully on the ground. Then he began to move slowly towards the house. Then he stopped, hesitated, looked down at his muddy boots, hesitated again, and finally turned sharp round and walked away to the stables.

Meantime Hatty Harrington and her cavalier had made a stately progress to the house. Evelyn took the young lady's shawl from her shoulders in the hall, and marshalled her into a comfortable room lined with well-filled bookshelves, to which Mr. Blake's long disused law books gave quite a learned air. Here the master and mistress of Ivy Lodge were seated, one on each side of the fire, and were obviously roused from a doze by the opening of the door.

Mr. Blake removed a silk handkerchief which he had thrown over his head; and Mrs. Blake, a handsome, portly woman in a gorgeous satin gown and diamond earrings, remarked that she really did believe there was something in the air on Sundays different from other days, for that she always felt overpowered by sleep on a Sunday afternoon until she got her cup of tea to rouse her up.

"It's the atrocious early dinner, ma'am," said Evelyn. "How can civilised creatures be expected to eat at such an hour?"

"But how could the servants get to afternoon church if we didn't, Evelyn?" said Mrs. Blake.

"Stuff and nonsense!" said his father. "Everybody used to do very well with a midday dinner not so very long ago."

"No doubt, sir. And our more remote ancestors 'did very well' on a diet of acorns if they could only get enough of them."

"Come, I think you ate up your acorns pretty heartily to-day, Master Evelyn, uncivilised though the hour might be," said Mr. Blake.

Hatty burst out laughing in a frank fresh voice. "So he did, Mr. Blake!" cried she. "And so did I. I like my acorns at one o'clock."

Evelyn flushed up, and tried to look cool. And his stepmother, who knew by experience that things were not pleasant for any one at Ivy Lodge when Evelyn was out of temper, hastened to change the subject.

Presently tea was announced, and at the same moment Harry and Basil appeared at the library door sleek and shining from the hands of Mrs. Farmer.

"I say, ma," shouted Harry, breathlessly, stopping his mother on her way across the hall to the dining-room, "isn't Roy Finch to come in to tea? He says he can't because of his riding-boots. But I know it's only because of Evelyn bullying us about being pigs, and he hoped we shouldn't appear in the drawing-room in that state before Miss Harrington—just as if *she'd* mind!"

"What is that boy hallooing about?" asked Mr. Blake. "We're not deaf, sir."

But the result of Harry's vociferations being to elicit instant inquiry from his mother as to what he and Basil could possibly have been doing on a Sunday afternoon to become "pigs," the young gentleman retreated to his father's side, and became a monument of mute meekness.

"Shall I go and fetch Roy?" asked Basil, not unwilling for his part to divert public attention from the inquiry aforesaid.

"Tell him we are at tea," said Mr. Blake. "I wait for nobody."

"And tell him if he doesn't make haste I shall eat up all his favourite apricot jam," added Hatty.

Basil darted off at full speed. When the others were seated round the table, Mrs. Blake said, "I don't know what Harry meant by Royston's boots preventing him from coming in to tea."

Evelyn, loftily toying with his teaspoon, observed that Finch had been riding, and the roads were heavy, and he certainly was not in a very presentable condition.

"La, what nonsense!" exclaimed Mrs. Blake. "He could get himself brushed down in two minutes. It wouldn't be the first time. The idea of Roy turning ceremonious!"

Evelyn murmured something in reply which was inaudible to the rest, but which caught the ears of Hatty, who set next to him. "*I* think Royston Finch very nice," said she, quickly.

"In that case, he is, at all events, very fortunate," returned Evelyn.

"And I'm sure he is a gentleman. If a gentleman rides through muddy lanes, of course his boots will get splashed the same as other people's. I don't think people's *boots* matter."

"Well said, Hatty!" cried Mr. Blake. "Roy has a famous champion."

Hatty wondered why he and his wife laughed, and looked so amused. For her part she saw no joke in the matter. Neither, apparently, did Evelyn, who drew himself up, and said in his most superior manner, "Miss Harrington is a Quixotic champion, who takes windmills for giants. When she is older she will not defend her friends before they are attacked."

"Nor even then, perhaps," put in Mr. Blake. "A good many of us quite outgrow that weakness."

At this moment Basil returned, followed by Royston Finch. "Just caught him," panted Basil, out of breath, but triumphant. "He had gone and saddled Sultan himself, and was setting off home. I'd awful hard work to make him come back, but I said you said he was to,—didn't you, ma? Oh, I say Ma, mayn't I ring the bell for some more apricot jam? Harry *has* been pegging into it while I was gone, and no mistake!"

Finch took his seat beside Mrs. Blake, shyly. "It's a shame to come in disturbing you all like this," he said. "But it's Basil's doing. He said you would be offended."

"Certainly I should. The idea of your stealing off in that way!"

"Regular sneaky," observed Master Harry, with his mouth full of apricot jam.

"Why can't you stay the night?" asked Mr. Blake. "Will your people be expecting you?"

"N—no, sir; there's nobody at home. My mother is over at Chardington."

"Very well then, you'll be put up in your old den."

"Hurrah!" cried both the boys, enthusiastically. "It *is* jolly that you're going to stay. I'm awfully glad," said Harry. "So am I," said Basil. And then added, with fine candour, "'Cos I want you to look at my pointe. pup to-morrow."

III

SUNDAY afternoon tea at Ivy Lodge was a serious repast. A great deal of eating and drinking was done in that house every day of the week, but on Sunday everybody feasted with extraordinary zest. Perhaps the sense that eating and drinking were the only amusements permissible on the Sabbath caused peculiar energy to be thrown into them. At all events, from the nine o'clock breakfast to the ten o'clock supper, the meals succeeded each other at brief intervals. However, the tea, like all sublunary things, had to come to an end, and at length even the boys desisted from devouring cake and jams.

The period of Sunday between tea and supper was the most trying time of the whole day to the younger members of the family. It has been said that eating and drinking were the only amusements permitted in Ivy Lodge on the Sabbath. But to these may be added gossip. Mr. Dobson, the curate, always supped there on Sundays, and Dr. Todd would drop in for an hour after evening service, and retail the news of the neighbourhood, whilst an occasional argument about politics between the gentlemen gave a masculine and dignified tone to the conversation. To be sure, the behaviour of the county and borough members was sometimes handled in a manner which worthy Mr. Dobson would have deemed incompatible with Christian charity under ordinary circumstances, but the public weal is paramount, and precludes a weak indulgence for individuals.

Now from these sources of rational enjoyment Basil and Harry were cut off. They cared nothing whatever about the county members, and would as soon have listened to one of Mr. Dobson's longest sermons as to his masterly denunciations of the policy of the Government. Games were, of course, prohibited on Sunday. There were a few smartly-bound picture-books—views in Palestine, with descriptive letterpress, an illustrated "Pilgrim's Progress," a work on Natural History, with coloured plates, which lay on a certain round table in the drawing-room, and which the boys were permitted to turn over every seventh day. But long familiarity with these had bred contempt, or at least weariness, and the social atmosphere of the drawing-room on Sunday evenings had been known so to oppress their youthful spirits that Basil and Harry had once or twice adopted the desperate measure—never resorted to except in the last extremity—of voluntarily going to bed before their usual hour. But when Hatty Harrington or Royston Finch were there, the case was different; and the young ones would gather round the picture-book table in a part of the room remote from the elders, and whisper and giggle merrily enough, while Mr. Dobson's deep bass voice rumbled harmlessly in the distance.

So it was on the Sunday evening on which the Blake family is first introduced to the reader. The two little boys, with Hatty and Royston, formed a group apart, whilst Mr. and Mrs. Blake, Doctor Todd, and the curate, held the place of honour round the hearth. Evelyn hovered for a long time on the skirts of the elder party. He had an opinion to give on Church questions, on social questions, on political questions,—and in fact on all questions. He seemed to have made up his mind about everything. His father, though he would cut a joke at his expense, was secretly proud of his talents, and silently enjoyed hearing him pose the curate and the Doctor. Mr. Dobson, indeed, could take refuge in his sacred profession. Once having mounted to the top of that minaret he could call aloud, secure against audible contradiction from the faithful below. But Dr. Todd often winced at Evelyn's glib statistics, and ready classical quotations, and took the habit of observing regretfully that studies of a scientific nature had driven all his Greek and Latin out of his head.

Gratifying, however, as these triumphs might be, there seemed to be a strong attraction in the laughter and chatter at the round table, which drew Mr. Evelyn Blake's attention thither, even in the midst of expounding the newest theories of international policy to Mr. Dobson, or giving Dr. Todd a compendious lecture on Evolution. When the four young heads—Hatty's shining among them brown and glossy as a newly-shelled chestnut—were bent down together in a burst of merriment, Evelyn would pause and stammer, and lose the thread of his discourse. And gradually he edged himself away from the circle by the hearth, and went to stand close beside the round table, looking down on the open picture books.

There was instant silence in the little group.

"Don't let me disturb you," said Evelyn, with a slight shade of embarrassment.

"Oh, I say, Evelyn, I wish you wouldn't come here! We were having such fun!" exclaimed little Harry, in an injured tone.

The others were so conscious of feeling what Harry thus frankly expressed, that Royston and Hatty blushed quite guiltily. Evelyn, not deigning to notice Harry, drew his chair up beside Hatty, and inquired what they had been doing.

"Oh, we were having a jolly game at patchwork stories. Hatty invented it," said Basil.

"Really! What is this game, Miss Harrington?"

"Oh, it's only nonsense. You would not care about it."

"May I not be allowed to judge of that for myself?"

"Well,—one person begins to tell a story, and when he has gone on a little while, the next one takes it up and continues it. You have to remember everybody's characters, and bring them in. And you must add at least one new one of your own. I didn't invent it. We used to play it at school."

"I see. But so far from being 'nonsense,' it strikes me that this game must be quite a stiff intellectual exercise! It demands memory, promptitude, invention, coherence of ideas——"

"Oh, but we don't play like that," interrupted Basil impatiently.

"I dare say not."

"I mean we don't bother about being so clever. We only do it for fun."

"We certainly have not been distinguishing ourselves by 'coherence of ideas,'" said Royston, laughing. "Our collection of characters was a very queer medley. We had an admiral, and a fox-hunter, and a witch, and a Red Indian, and a king, and a queen, and a fairy, and a pirate——"

"And a pet monkey. Harry would put in a monkey,—such silliness!" said Basil.

"Yes; and you forgot the monkey," shouted Harry. "You left him out in your bit. There ought to be a forfeit."

"Well, how could a pirate go about with a pet monkey? He *couldn't;* could he, Roy?"

"Boys, boys, less noise there!" said Mr. Blake, from the hearth-rug. And the round table grew hushed again.

"What a sweet pretty creature she is!" exclaimed Mrs. Blake, under her breath, to Dr. Todd, as she looked across the room at Hatty's smiling face. "And what a charming-looking couple they make, those two young things! They're just like a pair of lovers in a story book; ain't they now?"

"Which two young things?" asked Dr. Todd, drily.

"Which!" Mrs. Blake had never thought of coupling Hatty's name in that way with any one except Royston Finch. But as she followed the Doctor's glance, she perceived Evelyn seated close to Miss Harrington, looking at the girl with a degree of admiring attention which quite suddenly opened Mrs. Blake's mental vision to new possibilities. To be sure it was no unheard-of circumstance that a young fellow of five-and-twenty should be attracted by a pretty girl of seventeen. Nor was Mrs. Blake slower than most women at building up little romances for the young people about her. And she had built up her little romance for Hatty;—only with a different hero. She had made up her mind that Hatty and Royston would make a charming couple. But as to Evelyn—that was a very different matter. When, however, she rapidly reviewed Evelyn's behaviour during Hatty's visits, she began to wonder that she had never thought of his falling in love with the girl as a probable—a possible—catastrophe. Whenever Hatty Harrington came to Ivy Lodge, her stepson was certainly less touchy than usual. He was even, to her great relief, less instructive. His conversation descended nearer to the level of familiar household talk. The boys were not so often snubbed, nor she herself treated with such severe politeness. And even while she thought these thoughts they received a startling confirmation. The party at the round table broke up, and little Harry came across the room, and leant against his mother's knee. "I say, Ma," exclaimed he, with his own delightful frankness, "I *shall* be so jolly glad when Evelyn goes to London!"

"For shame, sir! You ought not to be glad at all."

"Oh, but I shall, though! And so will Basil."

"And pray what harm does your brother Evelyn do *you?*" asked Mrs. Blake; implying by her emphasis that there were persons to whom Evelyn's departure might more reasonably be cause for rejoicing.

"Oh, he's always bothering about after Hatty Harrington."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Well, so he is. We haven't a bit of peace now. Why he came and stood over us like a——camel," pursued Master Harry bringing out his simile with fervour, "when we were feeding the rabbits to-day just because Hatty was there."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Mrs. Blake, taken off her guard by this image of the magnificent Evelyn hanging about among the rabbit-hutches in order to be near Hatty. The next moment she said in a calm, matter-of-fact tone, assumed expressly for Harry's behoof, "Well, and why shouldn't Evelyn look at your rabbits if he likes?"

"Oh, bother about the rabbits! He was looking at Hatty. *I* saw him. So did Basil."

"I wish you and Basil would not talk so much nonsense," said Mrs. Blake, with scarcely any perceptible pause between Harry's

We also tried him at a quiet and soothing evening in the most respectable Anglo-American society, yet this did not improve him.

Hoping much from the varied excitement of the cotillon, we next took him to a dance; but, when a beautiful girl threw down an orange with the object of taking as a partner the successful scrambler after the golden fruit, he only gaped.

At last we came upon him in the Uffizi Gallery—deeply interested in the copying of a picture:

speech and her answer. And yet she had thought of many things meanwhile. After a second she added, "And if Evelyn does look at Hatty, why should you mind that more than any one's looking?—Roy's looking, for instance?"

"Oh, Roy! *He* never worries about like that. And he knows all about rabbits and pigeons and ferrets and things: knows a jolly lot more than Evelyn, I'll be bound; though he *ain't* always preaching and catching you out in your declensions."

"Harry!"

"Well, Ma, how would *you* like to hear Evelyn, jaw, jaw, jawing all the time you wanted to play, or anything?"

Mrs. Blake was secretly so conscious of a fellow-feeling with Harry on this point, that she made no direct answer, but contented herself with forbidding him to use such expressions about his brother, on pain of being sent back to school before the end of the holidays. But she spoke to her husband that night, and proceeded to tell him all that she knew and guessed as to Evelyn's inclination for Hatty. Mr. Blake laughed at first, and said she was always fancying such things; that she had formerly imagined there was some boy and girl love-making going on between Hatty and Royston Finch; and that, for his part, he thought Hatty Harrington's heart was in no danger so long as she displayed such a healthy schoolgirl's appetite for bread and jam as she had manifested that day. Whereupon Mrs. Blake, a little piqued, retorted that it was not Hatty's peace of mind which she considered in danger, but Evelyn's; and that it did not at all follow that because Evelyn was smitten with her, she should be smitten with Evelyn. "I believe that she and Royston are fond of each other," said Mrs. Blake, "and I must say that I think that would be a very suitable match. Hatty is just as fond of country things and country ways as Roy is. And they would live at Marby, not too far away, and be very comfortably off. Evelyn is altogether different. He is too—too clever for Hatty. He ought to marry a blue-stocking, who would be able to talk to him about—about all manner of things. And moreover Evelyn's wife ought to be a town-bred lady who would understand London ways and London society, and help him on in the world when he begins to be a rising lawyer." The truth was that Mrs. Blake was very fond of Roy and Hatty, and she had set her heart on making a match between her two favourites. Evelyn she could not honestly be said to love very dearly, although she had always done her duty by him, and although she sincerely considered him a wonderfully clever and well-informed young man of good principles, who would doubtless make an excellent husband for——somebody who was not a familiar pet and favourite of her own!

Mr. Blake looked at the matter somewhat differently. It had not occurred to him that Evelyn might fall in love with Hatty Harrington. But now that it did occur to him, it seemed to him, as he turned the matter over in his mind, that it might be a very desirable circumstance. The second Mrs. Blake's money was settled on her own children. Evelyn, though moderately well provided for, and with the prospect of doing well at the Bar, where his father's old connection would assist him, would not be rich. Hatty was the heiress of Gorsham House: the sole surviving descendant of Squire Travis and his wife; and would come into a comfortable property. Moreover, Evelyn's mother had been a Travis, as has been stated, and Mrs. Blake knew the Squire well enough to be sure that that circumstance would tell with him in the young man's favour. Evelyn might take the name of Travis in addition to his own: "Evelyn Blake Travis, Esquire, of Gorsham." The father thought that would sound very well, and he built up his cloud-castles, as well as his wife. "As to Roy," thought Mr. Blake, "he's a good lad, and a pleasant, and a manly. But he can't hold a candle to Evelyn, of course. And, moreover, his father was in trade in Birmingham, and he never had a grandfather at all, to speak of. And that settles the case with Squire Travis."

IV.

DR. TODD had only hinted to Mrs. Blake for the first time an idea that had been in his own shrewd brain for some weeks, namely, that Evelyn Blake showed symptoms of having been captivated by bright Hatty Harrington. The doctor was thinking of it as he drove up the avenue of Gorsham House next day in his gig. He was going to see Mrs. Travis, who had some slight ailment, and who availed herself of any excuse for a confidential chat with her old friend Dr. Todd. He was the only person to whom she could speak of her dead son. The Squire usually preserved a rigid and grave silence on the subject; or, if he were moved to speak of it, suffered so terribly in the struggle to keep down all manifestations of emotion, that his wife dreaded its recurrence. "Time, that cures every sorrow, seems to have no cure for ours," the poor childless mother would say to her old friend; and Dr. Todd rather encouraged than checked her tears and her tender rambling talk about her lost boy; knowing that they were a wholesome and natural relief to pent-up feelings.

On this special Monday morning his thoughts too were dwelling on poor Jack Travis. He had in his pocket a letter from that good physician in New Orleans who had been communicated with seven years previously, when Jack's widow and children had followed him so swiftly to the grave. This gentleman, Dr. Laverne, had kept up an intermittent correspondence with his English colleague on medical subjects ever since. Dr. Todd held certain theories as to the treatment of epidemic fevers, which had recently taken shape in a pamphlet. This he had sent to Dr. Laverne, soliciting his opinion on it, and had only just received the latter's acknowledgment and criticisms. A few words near the end of the letter had struck and affected Dr. Todd more powerfully than he was willing to acknowledge even to himself. They disturbed the quiet, melancholy resignation with which he had come to regard the domestic tragedy of his friends at Gorsham House, by opening shifting vistas of fancy, where the tomb had hitherto set its seal of silence and stillness. But of these vague hints too phantasmal to be called hopes—and of the words in Dr. Laverne's letter which aroused them, he took care to say nothing to Mrs. Travis. He was accustomed to tell her whenever he heard from Laverne; as that benevolent physician undertook to see that certain humble graves in New Orleans were duly tended and planted, and to be the almoner of some charities to needy European immigrants which Mrs. Travis annually dispensed there.

The mistress of Gorsham House was sitting in her own morning-room, a pleasant, chintz-furnished apartment, full of the scent of dried rose-leaves. A big, bright fire now burned in the grate, and Mrs. Travis sat near it in a large arm-chair, dressed in her accustomed black silk gown and cap with lavender ribbons (she had not worn any bright colours for seven years), and with a warm shawl wrapped round her shoulders. She was a frail-looking woman. The pink-and-white complexion had faded into pale sallowness long ago, and the glossy, dark hair was of a dull iron grey. But it was not only the hair and skin that had faded. The warmth and colour seemed to have gone out of her altogether—out of her eyes, out of her manner. The people in the village said that Madam had grown dull-like. And it was true.

As soon as the medical business of his visit was ended, Dr. Todd inquired for Miss Hatty. She had, he was told, gone over to Chardington, where there were some commissions to be executed, with the Blakes: Mr. and Mrs. Blake driving, and the young ones on horseback or pony-back.

"Hatty is a great deal with the Blakes," observed Dr. Todd.

"Yes; poor dear, she naturally likes the sight of young faces and the sound of young voices. Mrs. Blake is very fond of her, and the boys adore her."

"Quite so;—big and little," assented the Doctor.

Mrs. Travis looked at him curiously. She knew every inflection in her old friend's voice. "What is it?" she said. "What do you mean?"

"You won't think me meddlesome if I tell you what I mean? And you won't take it for more than it's worth:—a mere surmise of mine, but founded on some pretty close observations." And after this preface the doctor proceeded to reveal his suspicions about Evelyn Blake's sentiments for Hatty.

The grandmother listened with more lively attention than she now gave to most matters. It seemed to her, as it had seemed to Mr. Blake, that it might be a good thing if these two young people would make a match of it. Evelyn was a steady, well-educated young fellow who had done well at the University, and bade fair to do well at the Bar. Above all, they had known him from a boy. It was not like giving Hatty to a stranger. "I want the poor thing to be happy," said Mrs. Travis, tremulously. "She is a good child; affectionate and honest. It would be a great blessing if she could set her heart on some one that her grandfather would approve."

"And he would approve Evelyn, you think? I fancied somehow that young Blake was not quite in the first page of the Squire's good books."

"Oh, well——. You know Evelyn is very serious for his years, and a little bit stuck up about his learning. And John likes young men to be active and fond of field sports, and all that; and to have, perhaps, a brighter, simpler way with them than Evelyn."

The Doctor knew very well what image remained in the old man's mind as the standard and model of a young English gentleman. And he knew that Evelyn Blake was singularly unlike that image.

"But then," proceeded Mrs. Travis, "he wouldn't let his own fancies stand in the way if there was nothing else against the match. And Evelyn has Travis blood in his veins, you know."

That, in fact, was the great hold that Evelyn had on the Squire.

Then the grandmother inquired whether Dr. Todd thought Hatty "cared for" Evelyn at all. And the Doctor replied that at present he decidedly thought not. He had noticed, he said, that whereas she had formerly been lively and saucy to the young man, contradicting him and laughing at him, quite unawed by his solemn ways and his University honours, she had of late become much more reserved and civil,—almost shy,—in her manner to him.

"I think that's in his favour," said Mrs. Travis.

"She even seems to avoid him," said the Doctor.

"Well, I'm not sure but that is a good symptom for him, too. So long as she continued to treat him just the same as she treated the boys he had not a chance. You may depend upon that!"

Then Dr. Todd mentioned the receipt of the letter from New Orleans, and added that Laverne promised shortly to send the account of his stewardship, as he called it: the expenditure, namely, of the sum annually sent by the English lady about Christmas time. "And he says those plots in the 'God's Acre' are carefully looked after, and covered with flowers," said Dr. Todd.

"I am thankful to him," answered Mrs. Travis.

"Ah, dear me," sighed the Doctor, "to think of their all being swept away at one blow like that!"

The old lady only shook her head sadly. She did not weep. Once on a time she had cried for days together, until she dimmed and weakened the sight of her bright dark eyes. But her tears were rarer now than they had been.

"All stricken down together by that terrible fever!" pursued the Doctor, musingly. "Not one left! No child of poor Jack's blood to inherit the old name! When father and mother were both gone, the Squire would not have been hard on the children if any had lived, would he?"

"John was deeply, deeply cut by that dreadful marriage. But time softens rancour. And although seven years ago his wrath was still hot within him against that young woman,—she's dead and gone now, and she must have suffered terribly, poor soul! Think of losing Jack, Doctor!—my husband was very stern and angry then, as I say; but if it had pleased God to spare one of Jack's children—— Well, His Will be done! I doubt we were too much set on things of this world, and needed a lesson. But it was a hard one. It was terribly hard for weak human nature."

After the Doctor went away, Mrs. Travis lost no time in communicating what he had said about young Blake to her husband, and sounding his feeling on the matter. The Squire listened to her as attentively as she had listened to Dr. Todd. At first he was startled by the suggestion of any such ideas as love and marriage in connection with Hatty, who seemed to him nearly as much of a baby as when she arrived with her ayah from India. But of course that was but a passing feeling. His own wife had not been a year older than Hatty was now, when they married. Then, when he began seriously to consider the case, all those advantages connected with such an alliance presented themselves to his mind, which had been perceived by Mr. Blake and Mrs. Travis. "There'll be no one but the little lass to inherit Gorsham when we're gone," said he to his wife. "And it would be good to know that her husband had a strain of the old blood in him. If the child can love him—I don't think we ought to say 'no,' Susan?"

And Susan thought so too. They agreed to keep their own counsel for the present, and to watch matters for themselves. On Dr. Todd's secrecy and discretion they knew they could rely. And no one else had a hint of the matter. The old couple did not reflect that, as the Spanish proverb has it, "Love and a cough cannot be hidden." Neither did they reckon on the sharp eyes and ears of two of those most observant bipeds called boys. Determined to carry out her personal observations of the case at once, Mrs. Travis invited all the Blakes on their return from the excursion to Chardington, to spend the evening at Gorsham House. And as Royston Finch was still with them, he was included in the invitation.

The old panelled drawing-room at Gorsham resounded with loud merry voices. Basil and Harry were in irrepressibly high spirits, and eager to narrate the wonders of a morning performance at the Circus which they had witnessed at Chardington. Evelyn, who had been to Paris one Long Vacation, and seen Franconi's, was loftily disdainful of the whole show. Royston criticised the horses understandingly. But Hatty and the boys were uncritically rapturous in their admiration. The latter, indeed—a little subdued at first by the presence of the Squire—became so enthusiastic in their descriptions that they were with difficulty restrained from giving Mrs. Travis some practical illustrations on the hearthrug of the wonderful feats performed by the Brothers Smitherini; and especially by that youngest member of the family known to fame as "Alonzo Smitherini, the Celebrated Caoutchouc Child."

The Squire, meanwhile, watched Hatty and young Blake in the light of his newly-acquired views. He was struck by Hatty's glowing cheek and bright eye, and happy smile. Evelyn hovered near her, and waited on her, and looked at her, and listened to her as he looked and listened to no one else. That was clear. "Well, the lad is well-grown and straight-made enough," said the Squire to himself. "A little too white-faced and sleek, and tightened up in his clothes, for my taste. But if Hatty can fancy him——. We ought really to be very pleased at such a good chance of settling the child under our own eyes."

But by some perversity in human nature the Squire was not as pleased as he ought to have been. And he secretly wondered that a descendant of his own should be captivated by Evelyn Blake. "Those young scamps of half-brothers of his are jolly little rascals And that young Finch of Marby looks as if he had red blood in his veins; and he knows the points of a horse. But what there is in Evelyn for a girl to fall in love with——"

V.

AS the year drew near its close, there came a series of splendid days. The mists and clouds of November gave way to keen, clear, frosty weather. The hedges sparkled with hoar frost in the morning sun. There was skating and sliding on every pond in the neighbourhood. Altogether, for boys in general, and schoolboys in particular, it was the most delightful holiday season ever known. Our friends, Basil and Harry Blake, were brimming over with happiness and mischief: the two being nearly synonymous in their vocabulary. Beside all the other sources of joy open to their energies, there was a visit in prospect to Chardington, when they were to pass the night under the hospitable roof of Mrs. Finch, Royston's mother, who had a house there; and to go to a "grand gala performance" (thus the placards) at the Circus. Hatty Harrington was to be of the party. She and the Blake boys, under the escort of Dr. Todd, were to go by railway to Chardington. The Doctor would put up at his accustomed inn in the city. And at the last moment he was requested by Evelyn Blake to engage a room for him also, as Evelyn thought of running over for the evening. He had made a feeble feint of intending to look after his half-brothers, and so relieve Dr. Todd of trouble on the journey.

But Basil and Harry received this figment with such derisive indignation that Evelyn was fairly beaten from his guard, and forced to drop it. "Look after us! We don't want any looking after!" shrieked Harry in his most piercing treble. "And if we did, Evelyn wouldn't do it," added Basil. "*I* know who you're looking after, Master Evelyn," put in Harry again, hopping wildly round his brother on one leg, in an attitude copied from the "Wild Horseman of the Prairie," as represented in the circus on a bare-backed steed. "And so do I. And we both know if who wasn't coming you'd see us at Jericho before you'd bother to come too," shouted Basil, with inextricable confusion of syntax, but unmistakeable clearness of meaning.

"Those little brutes are becoming absolutely intolerable," muttered Evelyn, under his breath, as he walked away. But he did not venture to provoke any further outbursts of candour and criticism. The boys, having found a sensitive place in their apparently invulnerable elder brother, made the most of the discovery after the manner of their kind; and poked and prodded at it for the fun of seeing Evelyn wince.

The journey to Chardington was accomplished on the appointed day without any special incident. And Dr. Todd brought his party to their destination in good order and high spirits. There outside the station was Royston Finch, waiting with a pretty little basket phaeton drawn by a fat pony. And there was, too, a *char-à-banc*, with a pair of horses. Roy came forward to greet them, and to declare that they must all be his guests at dinner. "I'm sorry to say we can't put you up for the night," said he, addressing Dr. Todd and Evelyn. "At Marby there's room and to spare. But these town houses are such band-boxes. However, we won't let you eat your dinner at an inn. My mother would never forgive me. I hope you'll accept, without ceremony." Royston was at his best in the character of host. The stiffness and constraint which generally marked his intercourse with Evelyn Blake—whom he suspected of looking down on him as a country bumpkin—vanished before the claims of hospitality.

"I shall have the pleasure of driving Miss Harrington," he continued, "the trap there will hold all the others. Please to take

your place, Doctor. Jump in, Blake; unless, perhaps, you'd like to drive. The horses are going very pleasantly this morning."

Evelyn declined to drive. But both Basil and Harry volunteered enthusiastically for that office; and were already scrambling with each other for the reins, when Dr. Todd settled the question by bidding Roy's groom mount the box, and pulling the two would-be charioteers down into their seats, one on each side of himself. "I have come out for a holiday," observed the Doctor, "and I don't intend to set any broken legs and arms to-day. We will therefore postpone the pleasure of being upset or run away with, under the auspices of you two young gentlemen, to another opportunity."

Royston handed Hatty into the pony-chaise, and arranged rugs and wraps around her with solicitous care. And it seemed to him, when he pulled up at his mother's door, that the old pony had never done the distance between it and the railway station so quickly before. He jumped down to help Hatty out. Just as she placed her foot on the step, the pony started forward, giving such a violent jerk to the little carriage that the young girl lost her balance, and would have fallen to the ground had not Roy caught her. He held her in his arms; her hat had slipped back; her bright hair brushed his cheek. It all passed in an instant. Almost immediately she recovered her footing, and looked up smilingly and unconcerned. Roy's face was flushed to the roots of his hair. "You're not hurt?" he said. "Not the least bit in the world," she answered, laughing, and nodding to Mrs. Finch, who had witnessed the incident from the parlour window.

After she had run into the house, Roy still remained for a second or two standing on the pavement. When the servant came out to take the pony, he followed Hatty indoors like one in a dream. All the rest of the day every detail of that brief incident was constantly recurring to him. It was amazing that so many memories could belong to a matter so trivial in itself, and so swift in passing. He kept seeing a flood of dishevelled chestnut hair, a pair of bright eyes, a smile carelessly sweet, innocently arch. He kept hearing a frank, fresh, silver laugh, and thrilling at the touch of a slender waist in his arms, and a slender hand on his shoulder.

Mrs. Finch, a simple, unpretending body, was all kindness and hospitality. But Evelyn at first rather overwhelmed her by his politeness. The good lady began to fear that her house and her conversation were considerably below the mark of so extremely condescending a young gentleman, and to feel nervous and ill at ease. But the boys came to her rescue, and swept away all cobwebs of ceremony, as a fresh north-easter clears the sky. It was impossible to keep up a tone of high-bred repose where Basil and Harry were admitted on familiar terms. And Evelyn resigned himself to retire into the background, and to endure the laughter and chatter of the dinner-table with an air of supercilious toleration for the universe in general.

Although Mrs. Finch had provided various viands dear to the schoolboy palate; although roast and boiled, and speckled plum pudding, and latticed jam tart, oppressed the board, and although these were followed by a lavish dessert of almonds and raisins, figs, nuts, oranges, French plums, and such like winter dainties, washed down by full libations of the sweetest and stickiest raisin and ginger wine; yet before seven o'clock, at which hour the performance at the circus was to commence, the boys were afoot, eagerly leading the way through the frosty streets of Chardington, with as much lightness and activity as though they had been bodiless spirits ignorant of full meals and indigestion. The wonders of the circus were displayed in a rough wooden building erected for that purpose on a piece of waste ground. Immediately around the tan-strewn ring were numbered seats; behind these stretched the democratic pit, with absolute equality of discomfort; and then, a little raised above this level, was a circle of benches, cushioned and railed off, which constituted the aristocratic places of the amphitheatre. Here, in an advantageous position, close to the alley by which the performers entered and left the ring, with their elbows on the red-cushioned ledge, and their eyes unwinkingly fixed on the circus, sat Harry and Basil. They were furnished with a huge paper bag full of oranges and another of sweetmeats, Royston's gift; bestowed, despite Evelyn's look of horror and Dr. Todd's warning shake of the head. For Royston was one of those noble-minded persons who, when they do give schoolboys a treat, like to do it handsomely, with a fine broad faith in their powers of digestion, and none of those feeble fears about next morning which too often haunt the elderly mind.

Scene succeeded scene. There was the enchanting young lady in muslin skirts and satin bodice, who leaped through garlands and paper hoops, and afterwards patted the neck of her gallant piebald with matchless grace. There was the Indian Horseman of the Prairies, who beguiled his solitude, in those trackless wilds, by throwing up and catching eight or nine gilded balls at once. There was the rigidly-elegant gentleman in a tail coat tightly buttoned up, who stood in the middle of the ring and cracked his whip whilst a long-tailed white horse (announced as "the Arabian steed, Djeddah") went throughout a variety of paces, and who bowed with solemn condescension to the applause, as though he had done all the trotting and cantering and caracoling himself. "Just like Evelyn!" whispered Harry not too softly to his brother. There were the clowns, the performing pony, the strong man, the lady in a scarlet jacket and green velvet riding skirt; it was all delightful; and the hands of the Gorsham party ached with applauding.

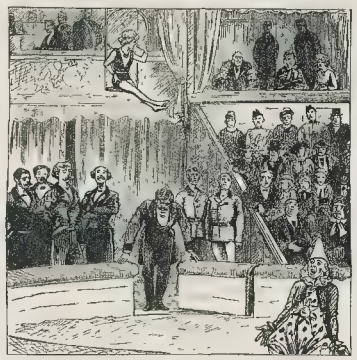
When at length the Brothers Smitherini appeared in the circus, the boys' enthusiasm knew no bounds. This distinguished family, who were, according to the programme, natives of Illyria, had acquired an extraordinary mastery of the English tongue, as might be perceived by the word or two they exchanged among each other. The ages of the brothers embraced an usually wide range of years: the eldest being a stout powerful man of forty, the second and third, young men of three or four and twenty, and the fourth—Alonzo, surnamed the Caoutchouc Child—a little fellow of seven or thereabouts. He was a pretty child, with bright blue eyes, and a mass of fair hair bound round with a spangled fillet. He vaulted and tumbled with astonishing agility; was tossed like a ball from one to another of the Illyrian Brothers Smitherini; clambered up on their shoulders; and stood finally on the head of the topmost of a human column of Smitherinis, balanced with outstretched arms, and receiving abundant applause from the delighted audience. When he was called back to make his bow with the others, Alonzo received many gifts of pence and sixpences from the occupants of the pit, and Basil and Harry emptied their bags of sweets and oranges to bestow them on him. The child came smiling close under where they sat, to receive this largesse, and looked up at the party with a frank, bold glance. The next moment he bounded away, making one farewell somersault, amidst a storm of applause; and some other performer entered the ring.

But Alonzo was to appear once more. Almost the last item in the programme was "astonishing feats on the trapeze by the 'Caoutchouc Child.'" The well-known crossbar between two cords was swinging at what was relatively a great height. And when Hatty saw the tiny figure in its flesh-colour and tinsel lightly mount up by a knotted rope hand over hand, and perch itself on the bar, she could not resist a movement of terror. "He is such a baby—poor little creature!" she said.

"Don't be alarmed, Miss Harrington," said Evelyn. "Accidents scarcely ever happen to these kind of people."

"See, they have stretched a strong netting below to catch him in case of a tumble," observed Royston more reassuringly.

The band began to bray and clash out a lively tune. The little lithe form up aloft there, turned and twisted in the shimmer of the flaring gaslight. Now he hung by two hands, now by one, now by his feet. Now he turned over and over, the fair thick hair falling heavily backward and forward over the childish forehead. Then



The child bowed and kissed his little hand, in acknowledgment of a burst of applause.

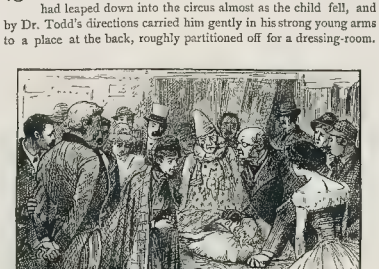
there came a pause. The music ceased, and the child, seating himself in the swing to rest, bowed and kissed his little hand, in acknowledgment of a burst of applause. "I'm so glad it's over!" sighed Hatty. "I'm so thankful he's safe! Why doesn't he come down?" But it was not yet over.

After a short interval, the coarse braying music struck up again, and the child began a new feat. He precipitated himself from one bar to another, hanging opposite to it at some distance; flying birdlike through the air, catching the bar with his hands, and sometimes turning in his flight. "Oh, I'm afraid!" murmured Hatty. But she was fascinated, and could not avert her gaze. Dr. Todd's eyes followed the child's movements with a strangely earnest, eager look. The audience watched in breathless silence every turn of the small flexible form. Suddenly, after one or two preliminary oscillations to obtain an impetus, it darted for the third time straight and swift from one bar towards the other with hands extended. There was a lightning flash of suspense; then the horizontal movement changed, and the child sank downward, glanced against the edge of the rope netting, and fell with a sickening thud on the tan of the arena.

VI.

THE poor little "Caoutchouc Child" was not killed. But for many days after the accident he vindicated his claim to be acknowledged rather a child of flesh and blood, by a share in the great human heritage of suffering.

At first every one thought he was dead. The little motionless body lay as it had fallen, still and ghastly, with two coarse patches of red paint on the white baby face. Dr. Todd was one of the first to reach him. Royston Finch had leaped down into the circus almost as the child fell, and by Dr. Todd's directions carried him gently in his strong young arms to a place at the back, roughly partitioned off for a dressing-room.



They laid the small form on a board supported on trestles.

There they laid the small form, still insensible, on a board supported on trestles, from which a motley litter of paints, and wigs, and riding-whips, and spangled tights, was swept off to receive him. The circus people crowded round—some in their street clothes, for the performance was nearly over; some in the gay or grotesque trappings of their calling. Among them was a woman in a cotton gown and a plaid shawl, very shabby and coarse-looking, who wrung her hands and moaned. "Are you his mother?" asked Dr. Todd, looking up at her. The woman nodded. "I'm all the mother he has, poor lamb!" said she, with a strong Irish brogue.

The result of the examination was that no bones were broken. But the child had received a tremendous shock. There might be permanent injury to the spine. No positive opinion could yet be pronounced. The first thing to be done now was to get him away into absolute quietude and repose. As soon as the manager of the circus heard this verdict he hastened to announce to the public that the child had merely fainted, but was uninjured; and that with their permission the performance would now proceed. But the audience were in no mood to see more. They crowded pell-mell out of the place, not without many kindly words and rough expressions of sympathy for the poor little chap.

Royston, meanwhile, had run back to the others, whom he found still in their places. Hatty had not fainted, or screamed, or gone into hysterics. She was sitting very white and silent, with the two little boys clinging to her. Little Harry had hidden his face in her lap, and was sobbing and trembling. Basil endeavoured to keep up a semblance of more manly courage. But he looked scared and terrified. Evelyn hovered behind the group, not knowing very well what to say or do; but occasionally bidding Harry for Heaven's sake to be quiet, and not distress Miss Harrington. "He's alive. No bones broken," said Royston, coming up breathlessly. "He's so young and light and elastic that the fall did not do him so much damage as it would to a grown man. And the doctor says he may be saved yet. I'm going to get the carriage round to the back entrance, to take him home. His mother lives a long way off. Give me my great-coat, Basil. It will do to wrap him from the night air. You won't mind walking home, Miss Harrington? Evelyn will take care of you."

"No, no; don't think of me, dear kind Roy. Go to the poor little darling," returned Hatty, wringing his hand in her excitement. Roy darted off again with a new spur to do all he could for the circus child; and the words "dear kind Roy" sounding sweetly in his ears. Evelyn pressed Hatty's arm tenderly as he placed it beneath his own to lead her home. She scarcely observed the action. She was a brave, healthy girl, with plenty of courage and common sense; but her nerves had had a great shock, and her limbs still trembled under her when she reached Mrs. Finch's door. Arrived there, she calmed her own tremors somewhat by that most wholesome method of considering other people's feelings. And she warned the boys not to burst into Mrs. Finch's presence with their news so as to startle and alarm her. The two children, by an inevitable revulsion of feeling, as soon as they were assured that the little tumbler was not killed, became boisterously hopeful about him. They vied with each other in enumerating the presents they would bestow on Alonzo Smitherini, "to cheer him up." And Harry, who was of a more impetuously generous temperament than his brother, after vainly trying to make an appropriate selection from his treasures, at length announced that he should give the invalid all his rabbits and guinea-pigs, two white mice, a postage-stamp album, and a bantam cock.

When Royston returned home he brought a fairly good report of the patient. But much care and constant watchfulness were required; and Dr. Todd intended to sit up himself that night, and next day to provide a competent nurse. The mother was docile, and anxious for the child's recovery, but very ignorant. And she had other children to look after; a family of tiny creatures, all younger than the little performer. And the place was very poor, and noisy, and squalid. "How good and benevolent Dr. Todd is!" cried Hatty, who was very fond of the old man. "He is, indeed," answered Royston. "The best fellow in the world! But I never saw him so interested in any one as in this child. He *is* a taking little fellow: wonderfully plucky! When he came to himself he asked if he should be let to do his tricks again next night. He wasn't afraid! Poor little chap!"

But neither the next night, nor the next, nor for many a night to come, was the child able to leave his bed. And during all that time Dr. Todd attended him with unremitting assiduity. He had become interested in the case, he said. He grew to be on familiar terms with the whole family. The child's father—in the programme Illyrian Smitherini, but in the parish register English William Smith—took the habit of watching for the Doctor at the railway station when he arrived from Gorsham on his daily visit, which nothing ever induced him to omit. And the two held long colloquies together out of earshot of the wife, Mrs. Kitty Smith, *née* Dogherty. And again the Doctor had many confidential and whispered talks with Mrs. Kitty, as they sat beside the sleeping child's sick bed.

One fine day, within ten days after the accident, the wooden circus-building was pulled down, and the horseriders migrated *en masse* to a large manufacturing town many miles away. Chardington had other amusements and other topics. And the little acrobat, who had fallen from the trapèze, and furnished so many paragraphs to the local newspaper, was forgotten there.

It was the evening before the company's departure when Dr. Todd alighted from a fly at the door of a public-house in a suburb of Chardington, entered it, and walked straight upstairs to an upper chamber, where he found Smith and his wife awaiting him.

The woman's eyes were swollen with crying, and she received Dr. Todd with a half sullen air. The man was all civility and alacrity. He gave his guest one of the two wooden chairs in the room, Kitty being seated in the other with her folded arms resting on a rickety table, and placed himself on the edge of the miserable bed. "Now, my friends," said the Doctor, "I believe we understand each other." The man answered briskly, "All right, sir." The woman made no reply.

"But in order to be quite clear and safe, I have written out a short statement of our case, which I will read to you; and you will tell me if I'm wrong in any particular. If it is correct, I will get you to sign it."

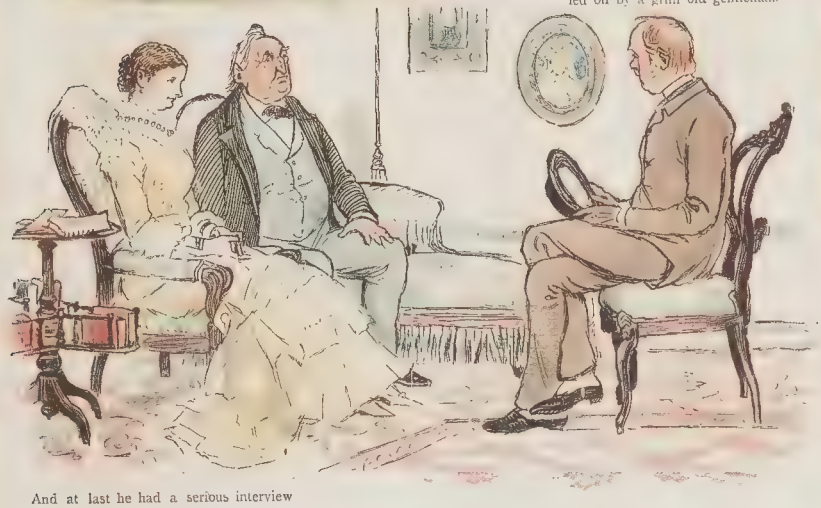
Again the man answered, "All right, sir." And again the woman said nothing.

"This then is the statement," said the Doctor, taking out a few leaves of manuscript from his pocket, and beginning to read:—

"'In the summer of the year 186——, William Smith and his wife Catherine——"

"Well known in the profession as Smitherini, Illyrian acrobat,

He had discovered at the ball the Picture Copyist in the garb of a goose-girl; but before he had had enough of her conversation she was led off by a grim old gentleman.



After this he spent most of his time in the gallerie studying pictures.

And at last he had a serious interview with the grim old gentleman—Signor Dante Allegretti and the Signora, his wife—an American lady—parents of the Goose-girl. On being assured of the stability of his income they excused Oakball's nationality and very insular appearance, and accepted him as a son-in-law.

With the prospect of a happy and delicious future, when he can have pictures copied and geese minded in the sweetest manner as often as he may wish, he recovered his spirits, and gave his last bachelor's party. (This scene is drawn from recollection only.—R. C.,

PREPARING FOR THE CHILDREN'S PARTY—"NOW, ONE, TWO, AND THREE"

FROM THE PICTURE BY A. E. EMSLIE

and Mademoiselle Estella, *artiste* of the hotycole," put in Smith, parenthetically.

"The ——?"

"Hotycole. 'Igh school of 'orseriding," explained Smith.

"Oh, to be sure! Quite so," said the Doctor; and went on with his reading—"'made part of a company of equestrians and pantomimists then performing in New Orleans. Connected with the same troupe there were an Englishman and his wife passing under the name of Sivart. Mr. Sivart acted as secretary to the company, and he and his wife between them earned a fair salary. But the affairs of the company were not going prosperously; their pay was in arrears; and they had a family of children to provide for. Mr. and Mrs. Smith were kind and serviceable to the Sivarts——'"

"Ah, thin, it's not much we did, nor could do," said Kitty, speaking for the first time, turning her tear-stained face on the Doctor. "She was a good sort of poor craythur, without much gumption, but ready to let herself be cut in pieces for him and the children. But he was a gentleman, from the crown of his head to the sole of his fut."

The Doctor nodded gently, and read on: "'The company left New Orleans very suddenly. The manager was in debt to all his performers: and they mostly accompanied him to a new place in the hope of making up arrears. But the Smiths and the Sivarts remained behind—the former because they had engaged their passage in a ship sailing from that port for England; the latter, because Mr. Sivart was already stricken with the illness of which he died after a few days. Mrs. Smith, meanwhile, had lost her own infant at a few months old; and she took Mrs. Sivart's youngest baby to suckle, its own mother being unable to nurse it. Mrs. Sivart caught her husband's disease—yellow fever—which killed her also, and her two little girls."

"As it killed many a hundred more in that awful season," muttered Kitty.

"'Mrs. Smith, having a mother's heart in her breast, would not abandon the orphan babe. She carried it with her to Europe, and she and her husband brought it up as their own. And this infant is the same child who now passes for Mr. and Mrs. Smith's eldest boy, and who performs in the circus under the name of Alonzo. We, the undersigned, attest the truth of the above statements, and are prepared to confirm them on oath.' Then here are to follow the signatures. Do you find anything to object to, in that?" asked Dr. Todd, laying the document down in the table before him.

"That's about the amount of it, put short," said Smith. "Of course there are many particulars which we could furnish, and have furnished, in a confidential way to you—by word of mouth. But, put short, that's about the amount of it."

"I have written to my friend in New Orleans," said Dr. Todd, "to trace, if possible, some certificate of the birth or baptism of that youngest male child, of whose existence we had never heard. I had indeed got a hint only a few days before I saw him, that there had been a boy born to the Sivarts, but it was not known what had become of it; nor even whether it had died before them. That letter from my friend Mr. Laverne set me on the track. Otherwise, although I might have been struck by the likeness, I should not have dared to hope;—and indeed I might not have noticed the child so much at all. If we get that certificate the proofs of the child's identity will be complete. I have no doubt of it, as it is, in my own mind. Nor do I think he could have a clearer certificate than his face, to any one who knew his father."

"If we'd have had any clue as to who he belonged to, we'd have given him up long ago," observed Mr. Smith. "But we hadn't. We were pretty sure that Sivart wasn't his parents' real name. In fact Mrs. S., she said as much one day to my missis. And she said that her husband's family was gentlefolk s, but they'd quite cast him off along of his marrying her. And she fretted about it because of the children. If Mrs. S. had lived, we should have heard more of the story. But the fever came, and swept her off in a twinkling, as you may say. Any sickness goes awful quick in that climate."

Without thinking William Smith a monster of greed or cruelty, the Doctor understood very well that the acrobat's willingness to part with the boy, and to give all the information about him which he possessed, was sharpened by the doubt whether "Alonzo Smitherini" would ever be fit to perform any more; and by the certainty that at all events the child must for some time to come be a burthen and an expense rather than a source of gain.

"And have you nothing to say, Mrs. Smith?" asked Dr. Todd.

"Why, I've this to say," answered the woman, turning round suddenly, almost fiercely: "That babe has been like my own nearly all the days of his little life. I nursed him at my breast the same as the children I bore. And a sweeter, lovinger, finer-hearted boy doesn't breathe, though he has the spirit of the deuce in him when he's roused! And why wouldn't he, and him of an ould stock of gentry? We're poor people, and we work hard for our living, and the little spalpeen he has had to fare like the rest, and get a cuff now and then, and maybe less dinner sometimes than he'd know what to do with. But I'd rather keep him with us to take his chance, rough or smooth, than give him up to cold, hard-hearted people that let his poor father struggle agin' the world no, I won't whisht, Bill! I'll say my say if I'm thrashed black and blue for it!—and all because he married the girl he loved! Supposing he'd done worse, like many a fine young gentleman, and just taken up the girl to amuse himself, and dropped her again into the mire of the streets, d'ye think his grand family would have turned him off then? Not they, bad 'cess to them! That 'ud have been all fair and square—I've just done, Bill, but I must out with it now, or I'll die!—and if that's what they'll teach my little orphan boy, to despise his mother's memory, that slaved herself into the grave for her family more fool she, God bless her!—why, thin I say that it's better for him to stay with the horseriders; and it isn't myself that 'ud give him up, not for all the bribes and baits of all the doctors in Christendom! And *you* understand my feelings, sir," added poor Kitty, with a burst of hysterical tears, "and you won't mind me, for you're a rale gentleman, and I'll never forget what you done for that child, and brought my little Polly through her teething an' all, ungrateful baste that I am!"

There was a pause, during which the Doctor took off his spectacles and wiped his eyes; and then Smith said: "You'll excuse my missis, sir, she's a little upset at the thoughts of parting——"

"Excuse! My good fellow, I honour her—I honour and admire her with all my heart! And she's right. She's quite right in her principles."

Then he soothed Kitty, still sobbing and shaken by the ground-swell of her passionate outburst. And he assured her that there would be no such feeling as she feared in the child's grandparents. If they had been too proud, they had rued it bitterly.

"I dare say, sir—I dare say. But it was like a stone on my heart, and I had to out with it," sobbed Kitty. "And I—I hope" (with a quick catching of the breath) "they won't teach the dear lamb to look down on the—on the purfession!"

The child had been told that he was to go on a visit to Dr. Todd in the country for change of air. He was still languid and feeble, and took the news quietly. They carried him down, wrapped in cloaks and shawls, to the fly. Before parting, Dr. Todd and Smith had a short private interview, whilst Kitty was fondling and kissing the child, and at the end of it Smith said: "I can't afford, you see, sir, to be proud about taking assistance, on account of my own young 'uns. This little chap has been an expense all these years, when I had no rightful call to keep him; and just as he's beginning to remunerate a bit, I lose him."

The Doctor did not think it necessary to dispute the point, nor to observe that the boy had already been "remunerating," as Smith called it, for two or three years. He merely answered, "I shall do what I promised," and went downstairs.

It was a still cold night, and the frosty sky sparkled with a myriad diamond points. The little boy lay still in the corner of the fly which conveyed him to the station, and was silent. Only, when he was being taken out of the vehicle to be lifted into a railway carriage, he looked up, and said to the Doctor, who kept close to his side: "What a many of 'em there is!"

"Many what, my boy?"

"Stars. I s'pose, if I hadn't wakened up any more after I fell down, I should have gone up there among them. Mother says you do when you die."

VII.

BY TEMPERAMENT Dr. Todd was enthusiastic, and, like all enthusiastic persons, he was subject to occasional cold fits, which were depressing in proportion to the previous glow of hopefulness. Such a mood was on him the morning after his arrival at home with his little charge. So long as his mind had been agitated by anxiety for the boy's life, and excited by the doubts, surmises, and hopes as to his parentage, which had now dawned into full conviction, he had pictured to himself only the trembling joy and gratitude with which the old couple at Gorsham House would receive this living memorial of their dead son. But now that the child was there under his own roof, and that he (the Doctor) had to prepare the way for this reunion—to face concrete facts, in short—he found himself troubled by doubts and difficulties. Despite his protestations to Kitty Smith, he could not feel absolutely assured that Squire Travis would eagerly welcome a grandson out of the circus, who had nearly broken his neck by falling from a trapeze. Dr. Todd had not lived much in the busy world, but he had lived in it more than Mr. Travis. And the practice of his profession had given him views of a more tolerant and philosophic cast than Mr. Travis had learned in his narrow life, ruled greatly by traditions of use and wont.

The child was naturally a fine little fellow. And the Doctor had at first thought that the sight of his bright young face, with its blue eyes and bold frank smile—so like poor Jack Travis's!—must infallibly plead his cause with his grandfather. But now the round cheeks were pale and wan, and the blue eyes had lost their sparkle. His smile was rare, and his movements languid and nerveless. And then in place of the bodily graces of his former childish strength and activity, there was little of childish grace and charm in his mind;—or so, at least, the Doctor feared. His ignorance, of course, was very great. But that was a small evil. It was the things he knew—so far removed from the knowledge and experience of most creatures of his age—that troubled the Doctor. He did not wish the little acrobat to be subjected to the prying observation of Gorsham gossips before he had learned some things, and unlearned many things.

Dr. Todd's cottage with its large shady garden stood in a quiet lane out of the way of casual intruders. And his old housekeeper could be relied upon to keep any such away from the invalid child. But after a day or two, when the fine pure air and country diet had already begun to put new strength into his limbs and to tinge his cheeks with colour, the little fellow grew restless and melancholy. He had been accustomed to the bustling life of the circus, and to the noise and movement and riot of Mrs. Smith's brood of babies—his brothers and sisters, as he thought them. And the solitude of the big garden, the silence of the neat orderly house when the Doctor was away, oppressed his spirits. Every morning when the Doctor rose, he resolved to break the state of the case to Squire Travis and his wife; and every evening he went to bed without having done so, anxious and irresolute; thinking that the next day the boy would be looking better, and would be more reconciled to the change in his life, and therefore more likely to engage his grandfather's affections. At length he made a calculation of the time at which it was likely he could receive an answer from America about the certificate of the boy's birth; and resolved to fix that as the epoch at which he would present his grandson to Squire Travis, let come what might. And meanwhile he set himself to prepare the child for the fortunes in store for him.

In this task he found some unexpected auxiliaries.

He was standing in his garden one morning examining what damage, if any, had been done to some favourite plants by the preceding night's frost, when Royston Finch rode by; he was taking a short cut home to Marby through some byways.

"Hulloa, Roy!" cried the Doctor, "you're in a brown study, and don't see your friends." The young man looked up with a start, and drew bridle close to the garden fence, on which the Doctor forthwith leaned his arms, and began to talk to him. Roy confessed that he had been in a brown study—a very unusual state of mind with him. And after a little while he proceeded to confess why he was so thoughtful and out of spirits. The Doctor, he opined, would never guess a certain secret which he (Roy) desired to impart to him. And the secret, brought out after some verbal plunges, as of a shy young colt, proved to be that he was over head and ears in love with Hatty Harrington. "Bless the lad, is that all?" said the Doctor; "why I could have told you that six months ago!" Whereupon Roy, with the ostrich-like ingenuousness of a young lover, was mightily astonished. But, encouraged by the Doctor's sympathy, he proceeded to declare that he never would or could think of any other girl than Hatty, who was the sweetest and the best and the dearest—and a great many superlatives besides—of womankind; and, moreover, that he had some sort of distant hope that Hatty might in time be brought to "care" for him; but that his case promised to be no exception to the proverbially troubled course of true love, for the Squire had such high notions about race and family that the modest genealogy of the Finches could never hope to satisfy it.

"Oh, the Squire talks so sometimes," answered Dr. Todd. "But you mustn't despair for an idle word."

"Ah, but they weren't idle words, Doctor. The Squire and Mrs. Travis have been very kind to me lately, and invited me to the House a good deal. And sometimes I fancied they guessed my feeling for Hatty, and were not unwilling to encourage me. And sometimes I was sure that that was folly, and that they did not dream of such a thing. And then you see I felt as if I were sneaking in there on false pretences. So yesterday, when I was in the stables at Gorsham House with the Squire—he wanted me to look at one of the horses, for he fancies I know something about that subject,—I began just to hint to him that I was thinking of settling myself in life; and that I was well able to keep a wife with all the comforts, and something more, that a lady had a right to expect. I was preparing the way, you see, to speak of Hatty;—quite diplomatically."

"Profoundly diplomatic," said the Doctor, with a nod.

"But he didn't let me get very far. He laid his hand on my shoulder, and he said very kindly, but with that stiff, obstinate look about the mouth that he has sometimes, said he, 'I'm glad to hear it, my young friend. And I hope you'll make a good choice.' I was just going to tell him that my choice was already made—because it is, Dr. Todd. And I should never change if I lived a hundred years."

"Of course not," said the Doctor, nodding again.

"But, before I could get the words out, the Squire went on to say that the first thing I ought to do was to secure the approbation of my mother, for that marriages made without a parent's blessing never turned out well. And then he said: 'In the case of my own granddaughter our choice is a little limited, because a Travis of

He walked off, forgetting all about the horse we had come to see.

Gorsham can't marry a man of no family. Hatty is the last of the old stock, and I don't mind telling you that we have a match in our eye for her, Mrs. Travis and myself. Nothing is settled yet, because she is very young. But she will never do anything against our consent, we are sure of that.' And then he clapped me once or twice on the shoulder, and walked off, forgetting all about the horse we had come to see, and left me standing there, feeling as if the sunshine had been suddenly snuffed out. Now, those were not 'idle words' of the Squire's, were they?"

The Doctor could not say that they were; and he felt, moreover, that this obstinate clinging to the claims of birth and blood on the part of the old Squire was of no good augury for the reception of Mrs. Kitty Smith's foster-child; and Gorsham was the Squire's absolutely to do what he liked with.

"Hulloa!" said Royston, suddenly, glancing at the parlour window. "Surely there's a little face there I know! You've brought the circus child here then, Doctor, as you said you would. How are you, old fellow? Ready for the trapèze again?" He nodded and smiled at the child, who smiled in return, and presently appeared at the house door, looking up timidly.

"Poor little chap, how he's changed!" said Royston; and then, following the child's wistful glance, he said: "Would you like to get up on my horse, and have a ride once up the lane and back again?"

The flushed cheek and sparkling eye answered more eloquently than words; and the doctor, having given his consent, and wrapped him in a thick plaid, the child was hoisted into the saddle, and set off on his ride, with Roy leading Sultan very carefully.

The Doctor stood at the garden-gate watching them, and as he did so a sudden resolution flashed into his mind. "By George, I'll tell Roy the whole story!" said he to himself. The horse turned at the top of the lane, and came back again, chafing a little at the slowness of the pace. The child sat firm and fearless, and held the bridle with the air of an old and experienced equestrian. He was bright and smiling, and chattering to Royston as he walked by his side in a way that delighted the Doctor.

"Confidence for confidence, Roy," said the latter, when they stopped. "You've told me a secret that didn't greatly surprise me. Now I'll tell *you* one, and I'll lay a wager you'll find it surprising

enough!—Tell this gentleman," continued the Doctor, speaking to the child, "what your name is."

The little fellow hesitated and coloured, looking from one to the other. "Tell him, my boy! He may know."

The child fixed his large clear blue eyes on Royston's, and answered in a distinct voice, like one who has learned a lesson:

"Jack Travis of Gorsham."

"Good Lord!" exclaimed Royston, falling back a pace or two to look at him.

"You have heard," said Doctor Todd, "that the heir of Gorsham made a strange marriage years ago. I believe that child to be his youngest born, and his only son, as firmly as I believe you to be Royston Finch, or myself to be Thomas Todd."

"Then *that's* the likeness I saw!" exclaimed Roy, still staring at the child. "It's the old Squire! Just his look about the eyes, and his positive kind of way of clenching his lips together."

"Come into the house, and I'll tell you all about it," said the Doctor. "You run away, Jack, to Mrs. Brown, and ask her to give you a picture-book to look at, and tell her about your ride." Then when the child had disappeared, he added, "I haven't seen such a bright look on his face for days. I suppose it's the sight of your young phiz. He lives with me and old Mrs. Brown, and no doubt it isn't exhilarating for a child like that. I want him to learn and to unlearn all manner of things. But things have to be learned without being exactly taught. And there's my difficulty. Come into my den, and I'll tell you all about it."

Before Royston Finch departed again for Marby, he said to the Doctor, "Look here; send the little fellow over to me for a day or two. I'll have the Blake boys to stay with me, and it will be good for him to be with them. Children learn of each other. I'll take care of him. And besides, my mother is a first-rate nurse."

To this proposal Dr. Todd assented gratefully. Royston went on: "And so you don't really think she cares for Evelyn? Well, I didn't exactly *think* so, myself. But then one can't tell for certain. And you know, Doctor, if Hatty likes me ever so little, I'll never give up. I can be obstinate, too, though I'm not a Travis of Gorsham."

"By the way, Roy," said the Doctor, as he conducted his guest to the gate, "perhaps you haven't thought of it, but this child, if he's acknowledged, will step into the inheritance of your bride-elect. Hatty won't be the heiress of Gorsham. And, between you and me, I think her dowry will be of the slenderest."

"Long live Jack Travis of Gorsham!" cried Roy, throwing up his felt wideawake and catching it again. "I never thought of all that. But now I do think of it——I think it's the best news I've heard for many a day."

VIII.

GOING to Marby was always a pleasure for the little Blakes. The house was roomy and rambling, with all sorts of queer corners, and rooms the shape of which it would puzzle a geometrician to define; steps up and steps down; bow windows with broad seats in them; and at the top of the house, huge disused garrets among the rafters—a very paradise of play-rooms. Then there were the large old-fashioned gardens, the hen-houses and stables and pigeon-houses, with all their live stock, and a colony of dogs of all sorts and sizes. Add to this a hostess with the most liberal ideas on the subject of jam, and it will be seen that Marby was a place in which to spend holiday hours, not to be matched out of a fairy story.

Royston Finch carried over Basil and Harry to his house, the day after his interview with Dr. Todd. When those young gentlemen arrived, in the highest spirits, and with their lungs and appetites in a vigorous state of activity, the first object which struck them in the hall was a small figure seated in a cushioned wicker chair by the fire, languidly pushing about the contents of a box of bricks. The hall at Marby was the favourite sitting-room of the family. Even in winter it was well warmed by hot-water pipes and a roaring fire piled high in the old-fashioned chimney. It was panelled with time-darkened oak, a thick red carpet hid the centre of the flagged pavement, and over it were strewn fur rugs. On the walls hung various trophies of Roy's prowess as a fox-hunter. And just at this time, Christmas being so near at hand, holly and ivy and mistletoe glistened everywhere, with their bright red or milky white berries.

"Hulloa!" exclaimed Basil, stopping short in amazement as the little figure in the chair turned its head to look at them. "Why here's Alonzo Smitherim!"

"So it is!" screamed Harry. "Hurrah!"

"Do you remember these boys, old fellow?" said Roy, advancing to the child. "You've seen them before."

The little fellow looked at them with hesitation for a moment, and then smiled and nodded.

"Yes, I know," said he. "They give me oranges the night I missed my tip at the bar."

"Missed your tip and no mistake!" observed Basil. "Didn't you come down a whack!"

"I say, ain't he white?" said little Harry, staring at him.

"He's been very ill, nearly gone," said Royston. "But you're all right now, ain't you, my hero?"

"Yes; I'm right enough," returned the child, boldly, "only——" and then the little lip quivered a little, "I want to see mother."

"And so you shall. She's to come and pay you a visit on Christmas Eve, you know."

"You ain't chaffing, are you?" said the little creature, with a wistfully scrutinising gaze.

"Not I, Jack. I give you my word you shall see her. And a gentleman's word is his bond, isn't it?"

The child seemed reassured by Roy's look even more than by his words, and a bright smile stole over his face. "'Tain't long to Christmas, is it?" said he, cheerfully.

The two Blakes remained in considerable bewilderment of mind, looking and listening—all eyes and ears. "Come here, you boys," said Royston, moving away. "I've got something to say to you."

"Are they going, them two?" asked little Jack."

"They shall come back again in a minute. Now, see here, boys," continued Royston, drawing them away out of earshot, "I'm going to trust something to your honour. You'll promise me not to tell until I give you leave?" Both children gave the required promise with great eagerness and earnestness; and Harry took this appeal to his honour and discretion so seriously that he felt it necessary to mention that Nurse Farmer *had* said he sometimes talked in his sleep, and he thought it right to tell Roy beforehand. But, to his great joy, Roy did not deem this circumstance a bar to imparting the contemplated confidence, which he did, to the following effect:—That the little circus child, whose real name was Jack, and not Alonzo, was a gentleman's son, and was about to be restored to his family; that, meanwhile, the more he could be reconciled to his new life, and become accustomed to the ways of gentlefolks, the better it would be for him; and that he (Roy) trusted Basil and Harry to help him to cheer, and amuse, and interest the little fellow, who was strange and lonely, so suddenly removed from those he loved and was used to.

Royston's narrative was received with enthusiasm, and put the two boys into such a state of excitement that he had to warn them to be gentle with the child, who had not yet recovered his strength. "All right, Roy, *we'll* be gentle," shouted Basil, doubtless with great sincerity, and the next moment rushed back like a whirlwind to contemplate little Jack in the new and interesting light of this revelation. "Hulloa!" said Basil, bringing himself up short beside the wicker-work chair.

"Hulloa!" echoed Harry; and then Jack, looking at them both, repeated "Hulloa!" Whereupon they all three burst out laughing.

"I likes him," observed Jack, pointing to Royston, who was divesting himself of his great-coat.

"'Like,'" corrected Harry, the conscientious. "You mustn't say 'I likes.'"

"Oh, don't bother him! He'll learn fast enough," said Basil.

"Yes, Roy is a regular brick!"

"He's a swell, ain't he?" said Jack.

"Y—yes; he's a gentleman, anyhow."

"So are you swells, air you?"

"Not a bit of it!"

"Can you ride?"

"I should think so!"

"Bare-backed?"

This question set the two Blakes off into a fit of laughter, in which little Jack joined, without knowing why; and after that the conversation proceeded most amicably.

"Mother's coming to see me at Christmas," said Jack, all at once, apropos, as it seemed, of nothing particular. "Have you got a mother?" This question being answered in the affirmative, he asked further: "Do you live with her?" adding, pathetically, "I always lived with mother till I missed my tip." Upon this the boys proceeded to inform him that they didn't always live with their mother, because they went to school with a lot of "other fellows," and that "fellows" couldn't take their mothers to school with them—a plan which Jack suggested—but enjoyed seeing them again all the more in the holidays, when "fellows'" mothers tipped them, and provided them with pudding, and performed other maternal duties. This view seemed to approve itself to Jack, who was clearly envious of doing as the bigger boys did, and who confided to them that his brothers and sisters at home were too small to play as he played, being, in fact, "quite tiny little kids," and that he knew how to hold the baby when mother was in the ring.

In a word, before dinner-time arrived the three boys were fast friends. Basil and Harry conducted the stranger all over the premises, showing him the birds and beasts; hoisting him up on their shoulders to look over the pigstye, carrying him on their crossed hands lest he should be too tired; shouting, rushing, laughing, pushing, hurrying him from one thing to another, in a way which would probably have given an adult convalescent nervous fever, but which, combined with the fresh keen air, put little Jack into high spirits, and brightened him up amazingly. The child was naturally

"Good morning, ma'am," said he, lifting his hat.

quick and intelligent, and in the course of a very few days he had learned a great deal from his new friends—catching their manner and accent, repeating their phrases with unconscious imitation, handling his knife and fork at table as he saw them do. And at the same time the things of the circus seemed to fade somewhat from his mind, and to interest him less. Only to the thought of his mother he was unshakeably constant. Mrs. Finch, who had been taken into Dr. Todd's confidence, was so charmed by the child that she expressed no doubt of his kind reception by his grandfather. "For my part," said she, "I should think the old Squire had only to see him, to be proud and happy to own him. And if I were you, I'd let him catch sight of the child, as if by accident." This suggestion being approved of, Mrs. Finch took little Jack into Gorsham with her one day, when she knew the Squire was likely to be in the village, and sat with him in her phaeton at the door of the general shop, making one excuse and another to remain, until she saw Mr. Travis ride by on his grey cob. "Good morning, ma'am," said he, lifting his hat. Then he drew up near the carriage to take her extended hand. As he did so, his glance lighted on the child, who had been instructed what to say if the Squire should speak to him, and who was looking up at him with his grave blue eyes. "Who's this little man?" asked Mr. Travis, returning the child's gaze with equal earnestness.

"This is a little orphan boy that belonged to some friends of m Mr. Travis. Speak to the gentleman, Jack—his name is Jack—tell him how old you are, and where you were born."

"I'm seven, and I was born in America. But I'm an Eng boy," said Jack, gravely repeating his lesson, and still gazing at Squire, as if fascinated by the old man's intense gaze at him. T was a pause, during which Mrs. Finch sat tremulously watching Squire's face. At length, after a silence which may have la three or four seconds, but which to her seemed intolerably tracted, the old man put his hand to his forehead as if he v awaking from a dream, looked around him vaguely, and t touching his horse's flank with the hunting crop which he alv carried, turned and rode off without a word.

Mrs. Finch was a little nervous about the result of her experim "But at all events," she thought, "an impression has been mi I feel sure the child's face struck him."

She would have been still more sure of it could she have seen Squire that afternoon go to an old escritoire which he always l locked, open a certain drawer in it, and take thence a faded minia which had not seen the light for many a year, and say to his w who was watching him with an anxious face, "Susy, if suc miracle was possible, I should say I'd seen our boy to-day as he when this was painted. There never was such a likeness. C the hair was different—much lighter, a shock of thick fair h And, strange enough, *that* seemed somehow familiar to me too. hope my mind isn't going, Susy!"

IX.

AFTER mature consideration, Evelyn Blake had m up his mind to marry Hatty Harrington, and he not contemplate so absurd an aberration of ju ment on her part as refusing to marry him. had thought of going away to London with mentioning this intention. Hatty was so young, in some respects so much of a child still, that it mi be well to wait half a year or so before entering into formal engagement. The more her mind and character w developed and matured, the better she would be al thought Evelyn, to appreciate him. But of late a sli feeling of jealousy had been aroused in him by Royston Fin And, all things considered, he thought it would be well to have position made clear in some degree before turning his back on Lodge for several months. He had, therefore, sought for a priv interview with Mr. Travis, and had informed the old Squire, w great self-possession and in very well-turned phrases, of the hon he intended for his granddaughter. Love makes even the sim cunning; and perhaps it was love which suggested to Evelyn Bl to insist so strongly as he did upon two points during his interv with the Squire. The first point was his (Evelyn's) profound se of filial duty, and the respect due to age, which had made l refrain from speaking to Hatty until he should have obtained grandfather's consent to address her; the second was his unspeaka value for the old family of Travis, and his pride and happiness having some of that fine English blood in his veins.

The Squire was quite vexed with himself, when he thought o the interview afterwards, not to feel more satisfaction in the prosp of this match, nor more warmth of liking towards a young m whose sentiments were so much in accordance with his own. "Y haven't spoken on this subject to my granddaughter?" said he. "you intend to do so before going away?"

Evelyn thought he would, with the Squire's permission. "A I suppose, you have good hopes of a favourable answer, eh asked the old man.

"I think your approbation will ensure one, sir," answe Evelyn.

"Ay, ay! Of course my approbation will go for something ought to go for something. But I mean——"

"Your approbation will be everything, sir!"

"Hang it all, but it's *you* the girl will have to marry!" exclaim the Squire, testily; and the next minute he felt ashamed a astonished to find himself almost antagonistic to the admira sense of duty revealed by this model young man's utterances.

It was this interview which had caused the Squire to cut sh poor Roy's attempt to plead his cause. Roy had not been se possessed, neither had his sentences been well turned, nor ev particularly coherent. But the Squire hoped very earnestly th young Finch's heart was not deeply engaged, for he seemed to ha quick, sensitive feelings, not altogether so amenable to reason a filial sentiments as Evelyn's, and, therefore, thought the Squire, the more liable to suffer. "He's manly, and modest, and children adore him, which is an excellent testimonial to characte and his seat on horseback is wonderfully like my poor Jack's thought the old man, musing on the perversity of that jade Fortun who bestowed such good gifts on the descendant of a Birmingha tradesman and denied them to—some who even had Travis blo in their veins!

In pursuance of his intention announced to Mr. Travis, Evel sought an opportunity of making his declaration to Hatty. Goi up one morning to Gorsham House, he met her just without t hall-door, walking alone down the avenue. He turned, and walk by her side. "If you will permit me, I will accompany you as f as the village," said he. "I presume you are going there."

Hatty would fain not have permitted it, but she could not s that, so they proceeded down the avenue side by side.

"I wished particularly to speak to you, Miss Harrington," sa Evelyn, at length.

"To me! There's nothing the matter with grandfather or gran mother, is there?" she asked, suddenly; for Evelyn's manner h an extra touch of solemnity, and his voice was not quite so firm n his utterance quite so glib as usual.

"Oh! no."

"Nor with—with Mrs. Blake, or anybody?"

"There's nothing the matter at all that I know of," answere Evelyn, with some irritation. He would have preferred a differe tone in Hatty, something more shy and sympathetic and prescie of what was coming. But there was no help for that now, so h proceeded:

"You must, I fancy, have observed for some time pas Hatty——"

CHRISTMAS MORNING—AT MOTHER'S BEDROOM DOOR

FROM THE PICTURE BY A. MARIE

She started, and looked at him quickly. He was not in the habit of addressing her by her Christian name.

"You must have noticed that I that you were an object of great interest to me."

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed Hatty, stopping short and clasping her hands together, while her face grew crimson.

"Don't be startled. I wish you to understand that I have no dearer wish in life than to arouse in you a similar, or at all events a corresponding, interest in me."

"Oh, *dear!*" repeated Hatty, with increased emphasis. "Please stop!"

But Evelyn would by no means stop. He proceeded to inform her that her grandfather approved of his suit; that although, having regard to her youth, it was judged better not to enter into any formal engagement at present, yet the match was sanctioned by the approbation of both families, and that he should work at his profession in London with new zest and vigour, feeling that he worked not for himself alone, but for her. Hatty struggled with herself to answer calmly and becomingly. "I'm very much obliged to you, Evelyn," she said; "and I know that you mean -of course it *is* an honour to me to say what you have said. But I hope you will forget all about it. It can't be, indeed. I shall like to be good friends with you, if you will let me. But I do not—I do not think of you in that way, and I never shall. I would have stopped you if I could, but you would speak."

Evelyn had grown pale, as he always did when he was angered; and he answered her, with more asperity than might have been expected from a pleading lover, that she was a child, who did not know her own mind or heart, and whose refusal was practically of no account. He should not press her any further at that moment, but she must understand that he considered her engaged to him by her grandfather's consent and desire. "And as to any school-girl fancy you may have entertained for another person, Miss Hatty," he added, bitterly, "you had better put it out of your head at once, I can tell you! It would not be allowed for a moment."

Indignation, which makes verses, occasionally inspires somenervous prose also. Hatty, whose vocabulary was largely recruited from that of her friends, the Blake boys, turned on her wooer with burning cheeks and blazing eyes, and addressed him in the following words:

"I thought you were a prig, but I did not know you were a cad!"

And with that she swept past him, and marched off at a tremendous pace down the avenue.

She sped along, almost mechanically, her head in a tumult, her heart beating fast. She had started from home with the intention of going to Dr. Todd on some errand from her grandmother, and she found herself at his door almost unknowing how she had got there.

The Doctor was at his garden gate, just preparing to get into his gig, when he saw Hatty approaching. "Do you want to speak to to me?" he said. "Jump in, jump in, beside me. I've no time to spare, and we can talk as we go." Hatty was hurried into the gig, with her head still confused and her heart still beating. The Doctor under other circumstances would have perceived her agitation, but he was now evidently much agitated himself. He had that morning received the expected letter from New Orleans. It contained documents which in his opinion put beyond a doubt the identity of the boy brought up by the Smiths with Jack Travis's youngest child. The moment had arrived for Dr. Todd to make his momentous revelation to the Squire, and he was then on his way to Gorsham House for that purpose.

But in answer to his inquiries Hatty told him that her grandfather was absent from home. He had gone to Chardington on business, and was not expected back until somewhat late the following afternoon. "To-morrow is Christmas Eve," said Hatty. "And grandfather is sure to be back then. He never misses. Besides, they have asked a lot of people: all the Blakes from Ivy Lodge, and the Finches of Marby, and you, of course, Doctor."

"Oho! Unusual festivities! At least they have been unusual since——before you can remember, child."

"I believe it is meant as a sort of —of farewell entertainment to Evelyn Blake," said Hatty, with burning cheeks, and hot tears stinging her eyes.

"Well," said Dr. Todd, after a pause of consideration, during which he had let the reins fall on his pony's neck, "let us go up to the house and speak with your grandmother. Perhaps it may turn out for the best to tell her first. You must be very gentle and careful of her and of your grandfather, Hatty. For there is a great shock and surprise in store for them—a happy surprise, I hope and trust. But they are old people, and you must take care of them, my dear."

X.

It was Christmas Eve, and the old panelled drawing-room at Gorsham House was glowing with warmth and light. A huge Yule log burned on the hearth, and the flames threw fantastic lights and shadows on the carved ceiling, and made the crimson curtains rich with a deep mellow warmth of colour. Here were assembled Mr. and Mrs. Blake with the boys and Evelyn; Mrs. Finch, Royston, Dr. Todd, Mr. Dobson, the curate, Hatty, and Mrs. Travis. The old lady sat with Hatty's hand close clasped in hers, and a look of concentrated expectation on her delicate aged face. But, though anxious and high-strung, she did not seem so feeble and nervous as she had often been of late. She held her granddaughter's hand with a firm pressure, and was very quiet. The Squire had not yet returned. But the train which was to bring him from Chardington was already due at the station half-a-mile beyond the village, and he was expected at home from minute to minute.

There was a general feeling in the little company that something unusual was about to happen; a sense of excitement hovered in the air like an electric current. Of those present, only Mr. and Mrs. Blake, Evelyn, and Mr. Dobson were not at all in the secret. But those who knew it had their tongues tied. Not a word was to be said until the Squire's arrival. The two little Blakes, who had only come over from Marby with Mrs. Finch that evening, convulsively clutched each other from time to time in the effort—almost beyond their strength—to say nothing to their mother about the little circus-child, whose parentage (still unknown to them) was to be revealed that evening. Harry in particular felt himself every now and then impelled to make a sudden rush behind the crimson curtains into the deep embrasure of a window, and there to roll on the floor with his pocket handkerchief stuffed into his mouth. Mrs. Finch was nervous, and answered at random when she was spoken to. Mrs. Blake conversed in a low tone with the curate, and Evelyn moved restlessly about the room, very much less at his ease than usual. He had taken it into his head that some definite arrangement was to be made that night about his engagement. The party—an innovation in Gorsham during these latter years—had been, as Hatty said, intended as a farewell entertainment for Evelyn; the Squire thinking in all good faith that he would thereby please his granddaughter.

As soon as Evelyn had entered the room that evening, Hatty had gone up to him and tendered her hand. "Don't let us be bad friends this Christmas time of all times, Evelyn," she had said. "I spoke to you as I ought not to have spoken. It was wrong, and I beg your pardon. And I dare say you feel, too, that I have something to forgive. Shake hands and bear no malice."

"My dear Hatty," returned Evelyn, taking her proffered hand, and holding it loosely for a moment as he looked down on her from behind his starched cravat, "there can be no question of 'malice' between us. You are a child, as I told you."

Then Hatty had walked away with a little shade of disappointment on her clear young forehead, and taken her place beside her grandmother.

Presently the big gate bell rang, and then wheels were heard crushing the gravel of the drive. "Here's the Squire!" cried Basil, in a suffocated voice, while Harry pinched himself in irrepressible excitement.

Dr. Todd rose. "Shall I meet him?" he said. But Mrs. Travis had already got up from her chair, and was standing firmly alone. "No," she said. "No, Doctor. I'll go to him by myself. John and I faced it all together, and no one but I must tell him after all these years." She waved off Hatty, who offered to support her, and walked steadily out of the room.

There was a general silence for a few moments. Then Mr. Blake said in a subdued tone of voice. "Can any one tell me what the deuce is going on here?"

No one could or would. And there ensued another anxious and uneasy silence. Dr. Todd went and stood near Mrs. Finch. "Has he got all the letters and papers?" whispered the latter.

"Yes," answered the Doctor.

"And the woman——? Has she arrived?"

"Yes," said the Doctor again.

Basil had joined Harry behind the window curtains. Mrs. Finch frankly gave up any semblance of calm self-possession, and Royston

Squire Travis advanced into the room, carrying in his arms little fair-haired Jack.

walked up and down the room, varying his march only by a short whispered colloquy with Hatty from time to time. The French clock on the chimneypiece chimed the half-hour since Mrs. Travis had gone to her husband.

All at once the old footman—as to whose sojourn in Gorsham House the memory of man ran not to the contrary—came to the door, and in a subdued tone, begged Dr. Todd and Mr. Dobson to go to the Squire. When those two gentlemen left the room, Mr. Blake, becoming a little irritated at a mysterious state of things in which he was left out in the dark, observed ironically that the Squire seemed to be in a hopeful way. He had the doctor and the clergyman already, and only the lawyer was wanting. "I expect to be fetched directly," said Mr. Blake, who was only put out because he did not expect it.

At length a sound of approaching footsteps was heard. The door was thrown open, and Squire Travis advanced into the room, carrying in his arms little fair-haired Jack, who gazed over his shoulder with a joyous smile at a female form in the shadow behind them. Mrs. Travis walked beside her husband, holding one of the child's little hands, and Dr. Todd and the Curate brought up the rear.

There was a hush in the drawing-room, as if every one held his breath. The Squire walked straight into the middle of the room, set the child down before him, and, standing with one hand on the baby head, said, in a solemn, tremulous voice, "My friends, by God's mercy to me a sinner, I have lived to see the son of my dear lost son John Travis and Alice his lawful wife, born in America, and nurtured and cared for by this good Christian woman,"—here he turned, and gently drew forward the woman in the doorway,—"who has been his second mother. I want you all to remember and take note in case I should die this night, that I acknowledge this child as my grandson and heir. Any of you who remember my dear boy Jack will recognise his face over again in this child. And I who"—here the Squire's voice broke a little—"who saw his poor mother but once in my life, recollect she had just such a mass of fair silky hair as this under my hand. The Lord hath taken away, but the Lord hath given," said the old man, tremulously; and the Curate added in a full, grave voice, "Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

There was a momentary pause, and then Harry and Basil rushed forward from the ambush of the window-curtains, and broke into a shrill "Hurrah!" That sound seemed to act like a spell, to unloose every tongue. There was an instant hubbub of voices. All crowded round the Squire and Mrs. Travis. There was a chorus of ejaculations, a murmur of sobs and laughter. Little Jack was kissed, and hugged, and caressed, and questioned all in a breath. The first to turn round and draw forward the stranger woman, who was crying quietly to herself in the background, was the Squire.

"My good soul!—my dear friend!" said the Squire, "you must not be sad or sorrowful amongst us all. Little Jack will love you and reverence you all his life, or he's not his father's son nor my grandson."

"Ah! it isn't sad or sorrowful I am, sir," sobbed Kitty Smith, drying her eyes. "Sure, I was thinking it's his own poor mother will be a happy woman in Paradise this night to see him acknowledged among the gentry!"

. . . . . .

The Christmas bells chimed out sweetly next day over Gorsham village in the clear wintry air, and the organ sounded beautiful and mystical to the little heir of Gorsham, sitting with wondering eyes beside his grandfather in the high pew, adorned with Christmas evergreens.

It all happened years ago; and if you went to Gorsham Church now you would find no pews, but open seats, and new stained-glass windows, and a priest who intones the service. But there are still fair, blue-eyed children of the old English breed. And Dr. Todd—who must be eighty—declares that Hatty Finch's eldest boy has the Travis eyes and hair; and young Jack, the reigning Squire, laughs, and says: "All right, Doctor. But there's not a Travis, nor a Howard, nor a Royal Prince in the land that I'd put before Mammy Smith, God bless her!"

And the Doctor pats his shoulder, and says he is right.

Miley Mellachin's Borrowed Plumes

By MISS C. J. HAMILTON,

Author of "Marriage Bonds," "The Flynns of Flynnville," &c.

I.

MILEY MELLACHIN was "redding up;" in other words, cleaning house. There he was, busily sweeping the dust into the corners of his cabin with a heather broom, and flicking away cobwebs from the rafters. Now this cleaning process was by no means a common occurrence with Miley. He usually took things "aisy," and allowed them to go on in their own way with perfect equanimity. But this morning was a turning-point in our friend's career,—he was expecting the father and brother of his intended bride to pay a visit of inspection, and to view the state of things generally at his farm. If Miley had been expecting a visit from his landlord, or the agent, or the special correspondent of a daily newspaper, how forlorn and miserable his surroundings would have been made to appear! Children everywhere, dirt pre-eminent, and not an animal to be seen about the place, but a lean goat and a couple of dispirited chickens! To-day, however, the case was different. Miley was anxious to put a stylish figure in the eyes of his future relations, and to put his best foot foremost.

A word must now be said as to the real facts of his position. He was a widower, with ten children, and these appendages had greatly interfered with his matrimonial prospects. In vain had he endeavoured to secure the object of his ambition, a "wife with a fortin'" in his own neighbourhood. The girls, one and all, had declared that, though "Miley himself was well enough, the childre were too many for them." Here, then, was an unfortunate plight for any poor man—boycotted among the fair sex;—wifeless, yet wishing to marry; and fortuneless, though keenly desirous of securing a fortune.

Things were in this deplorable condition when Miley's aunt, who lived in the county Armagh, invited him to pay her a visit. And now Miley's luck suddenly changed. In this new part of the country he easily passed for a bachelor, and as he was a good-looking fellow, and appeared considerably younger than his age, he soon found favour amongst the spinsters of the vicinity. His choice, or rather his aunt's choice, fell on a farmer's daughter, Sibby Quin, somewhat past her first youth, being on the wrong side of thirty, but stirring, strong, and active, and safe to have 200*l.* paid down as a marriage portion. Miley met the fair Sibby on a Thursday evening, and on Sunday, after Mass, he proposed, and was duly accepted, with one proviso, that Sibby's father and brother should pay a visit of inspection, in order to ascertain personally how matters stood at Miley's farm. It was this visit to Anascragh which the enamoured swain was now expecting. The contrast between the state of Miley's affairs at it really was, and as he wished it to appear, was decidedly startling. Not only was he a widower with ten children, instead of a bachelor with no encumbrances whatever, but he was a poor man instead of a rich one. His farm of nine acres was very fair land, part of it was reclaimed bog, and afforded rich pasture-ground for cattle, but Miley was idle and fond of the "drop," so his live stock had gradually dwindled down till it now consisted of two weakly calves, a goat, three hens, and a thin grey cat. The doctrines of the Land League had, of course, found favour with Miley; he was too lazy to interfere with his neighbours, but for himself he resolutely resolved to pay no rent, and had not done so for two years. He had been frequently threatened with notices to quit, but always contrived to stay on. The crops, the weather, and above all, the "childre," had afforded excellent excuses ready to his hand. At the shops in the town of Ballagh, Miley already owed long scores, so his affairs were anything but prosperous. The difficulty now was to thrust all these unpleasant

(*Continued on page 20*)

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54 pieces	£0 18 6
70 "	1 1 -
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Marble Top Mahogany or Birch Washstand
Round Corners, with two Drawers, on four Turned or Curved Legs, Marble Top, with or without Hole pierced for Basin

	2 ft 6 in	3 ft	3 ft 6 in	3 ft 9 in	4 ft	4 ft 4 in
No 1	38s 6d	48s 6d	50s	60s	70s	—
2	42s 0d	50s 0d	60s	72s	75s	—
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Handsome Mahogany or Oak Hall Chair,
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Handsome Brass Fender, with Best Berlin Black Base,
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Stuffed very soft, 35s.
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With or without Hole pierced for Basin, on Turned Legs, or Plain

2 ft 6 in.	28s. 6d.	32s 6d	37s 6d
3 ft 0 in.	32s 6d.	37s 6d.	42s 6d
3 ft 6 in.	37s 6d.	42s 6d.	50s
4 ft 0 in.	48s 0d.	55s 0d.	70s.

Early English Ebonised Corner Cabinet.
Richly Decorated, 1 ft. 10 in wide by 3 ft. 5 in high, £3 3s.

Superior Walnut Early English Canterbury What-not.
With Drawer £3 3 0
Black and Gold, ditto . . . £3 13 6

Handsome Black and Gold Glass,
With Shelves, best plates, 4 ft 6 in wide by 4 ft high, £2 17s. 6d
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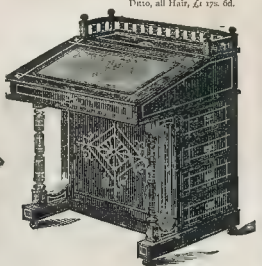

Ebonized & Gilt Early-English Davenport.
With Morocco Top, any colour, 5 guineas.

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The Berlin Easy Chair.
Spring seat, well upholstered in Tapestry £2 17 6
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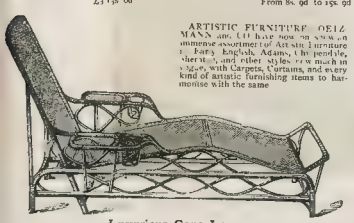

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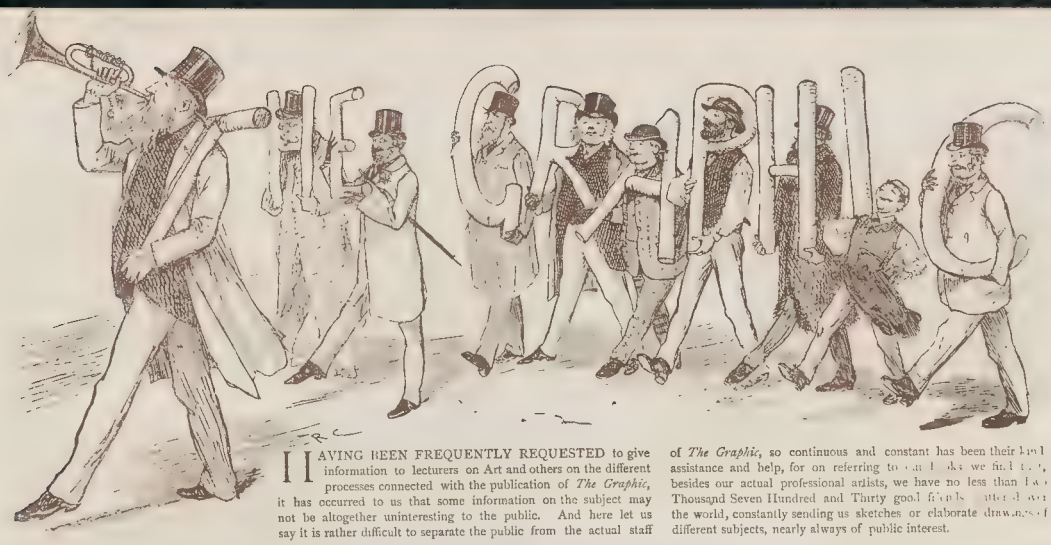
CHRISTMAS MORNING—DECORATING THE SIGNBOARD

FROM THE PICTURE BY YEEND KING



HAVING BEEN FREQUENTLY REQUESTED to give information to lecturers on Art and others on the different processes connected with the publication of *The Graphic*, it has occurred to us that some information on the subject may not be altogether uninteresting to the public. And here let us say it is rather difficult to separate the public from the actual staff of *The Graphic*, so continuous and constant has been their kind assistance and help, for on referring to our books we find that, besides our actual professional artists, we have no less than Two Thousand Seven Hundred and Thirty good friends scattered over the world, constantly sending us sketches or elaborate drawings of different subjects, nearly always of public interest.

H. Herkomer, A.R.A. Sydney P. Hall E. J. Gregory G. Durand H. Woods, A.R.A. F. Holl, A.R.A. Luke Fildes, A.R.A. W. Small

SOME "GRAPHIC" ARTISTS

FROM AN ENGRAVING IN "HARPER'S MAGAZINE"

"THE GRAPHIC" SCHOOL OF ENGRAVING

It is a common remark made to us, "How can you find fresh subjects to fill so many pages week after week?" But so far from there being any difficulty on that score, our greatest trouble is the constant rejection of valuable material for want of room. Of all the duties of the Director none is more painful or repugnant to his feelings than returning to the artist or amateur an interesting sketch which he has been at much trouble to make for us, and which we are reluctantly obliged to decline for want of space.

Thanks, however, to two great factors, we hope to be able to lessen this. The first is the large and constantly increasing support of the public, secondly, the powers of Electricity now called to our aid. Although aspiring to have some influence for good on the advancement of Art, we do not forget we have always been, and wish to continue, a *News* Paper.

Only ten years ago, if an event suitable for pictorial illustration occurred on the Saturday, it was considered sharp work to sketch, draw on the wood, engrave, electrotype, and print the subject to be illustrated for the issue of the following Saturday. By improved machinery it has become possible to illustrate an event happening on the Tuesday of the same week, and now we propose, by the aid of the new electro-dynamo machines, to save many hours in electrotyping, and so be able to give our latest news-pictures up to Wednesday evening.

We propose, therefore, frequently to give with *The Graphic* an extra *sketch sheet*, thus bringing up our news to the latest moment, largely increasing the number of our engravings, and, consequently, rejecting fewer of the many subjects of interest sent us by our kind correspondents.

Our object, however, in making this announcement is to ask for the indulgence of the critical when they look on this sketch sheet; and should they find this Prince's nose a little too long, or that man in the crowd even without a nose at all, they will condone the offence, if they bear in mind the speed with which artist, engraver, electrotyper, and printer have been working day and night.

In giving this slight account of the progress of *The Graphic*, and our intentions for the future, we must mention as a matter of some pride and satisfaction our constantly increasing number of supporters in the United States.

We have our corn, pork, apples from America, and goodness knows what besides, and not satisfied with that, our ever alert cousins are determined to supply us with Art. All honour to the Scribners and Harpers for their admirable work, and the gallant stand they make here. Thanks, however, to the support of the Britisher, we are now enabled to reciprocate. We sell an edition of Fifty Thousand copies of this Number in the United States, although we are heavily handicapped by a duty of 25 per cent., and the American retailer charges half-a-dollar, that is, Two Shillings each copy.

Gentle reader, before this Christmas Number is laid on one side, let us try and convey to you the amount of trouble, and labour, and anxiety it has caused, and the number of busy hands it has occupied. More than twelve months ago Mr. Millais, Mr. Yeames, Mr. Caldecott, Mr. Boughton, and many other artists had already placed in our hands their pictures, and our task is to deliver to you for a shilling faithful copies of works that have cost many thousand pounds.

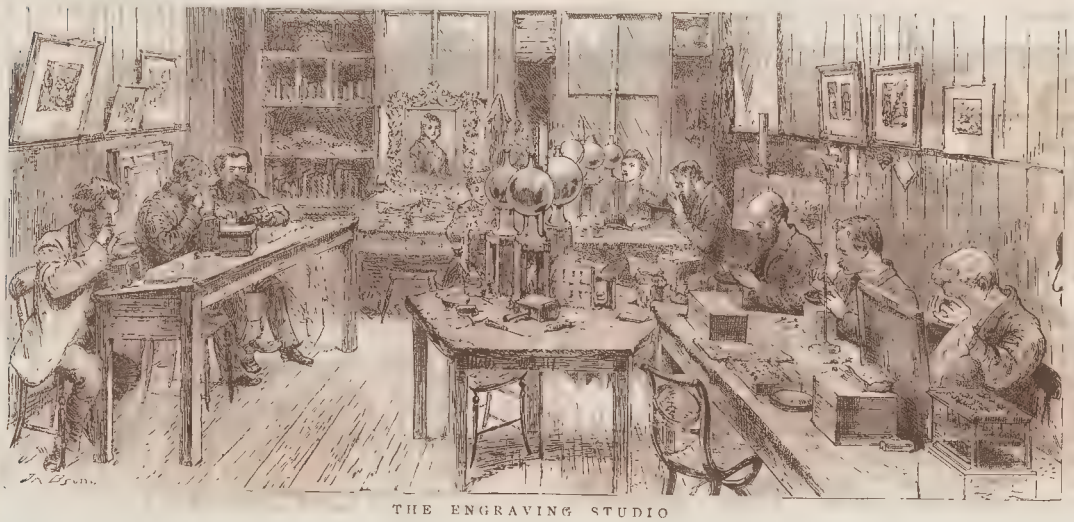
First, then, take "Little Mrs. Gamp." The picture is photographed on to box-wood, and engraved. This is called the key, or black block. Then has to be produced each colour-plate in relief like the engraved block, only in metal—buff, yellow, pink, brown, blue, crimson, and so on, altogether fourteen colour plates.

There are no less than nine separate printings on the child's face, two yellow tints, three flesh, two grey, besides a brown and blue—the effect and gradation required being produced by the action of acid on copper plates, the acid being allowed to bite or eat away the lighter parts, leaving the darks in relief.

Each plate has then an impression taken by a hand press, one on the top of another. The result when finished is appalling; and although Mr. Millais is well known as the most good-tempered and genial artist, it would be dangerous to show him the proof. This colour must be altered, that plate thrown away, and another redone, this colour softened, that strengthened. At last another proof is reprinted, with better result. The fourteen plates are now ready for the machine; but to enable the number to be printed by Christmas (we may suppose ourselves now starting about April) each plate must be duplicated by electrotyping.

The process of electrotyping may be briefly described as follows. The wood block or colour plate is placed in a bed of wax, which has been melted, and allowed to cool until it has arrived at the proper consistency. It is then submitted to a great pressure in a press of hydraulic or other construction, and in this way a *fac-simile* of the original is reproduced, but with every detail

ENGRAVING AT NIGHT



THE ENGRAVING STUDIO

FINISHING THE ELECTROTYPES

THE BATTERIES AND DYNAMO MACHINE AT WORK

"THE GRAPHIC" ELECTROTYPING ROOM

reversed. This wax impression is then covered with a thin coating of black lead, such being a good conductor of electricity, and is hung by means of a brass rod in a large bath filled with a solution of sulphate of copper, sulphuric acid, &c. Side by side with this bath is a powerful battery of Smee's construction, that is to say zinc, and platinised silver in dilute sulphuric acid. The current generated by this battery is put into connection with the wax mould hung in the bath, and also with a sheet of copper also hung there side by side with the mould. The effect of the electricity is in the first place to decompose the copper, and in the second place to attract the particles of copper to the mould. In a short time a thin coating of copper has formed upon the mould, of which it is again the reverse, and consequently the exact facsimile of the original block. The shell, as it is called, is then filled up at the back with metal in order to make the surface perfectly hard and suitable for printing, and after being made smooth and uniform in thickness by means of lathes and planing machines, it is mounted upon wood and is ready for the machine.

In place of the battery above mentioned, the current of electricity is now largely obtained from a dynamo-electric machine, such as may be seen in one of our engravings. It is simply a modification of the machine by which the electric light is produced, and in which the current is obtained by the rapid revolution of a ring of soft iron bound round with coils of wire in front of the poles of a series of powerful magnets.

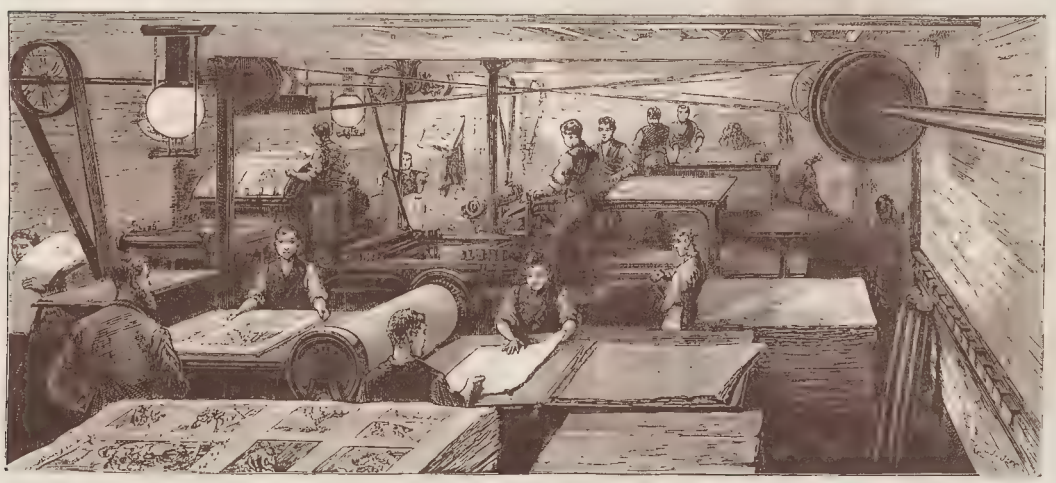
A machine now starts on its task of printing over half-a-million impressions. One printer has charge of the machine, and is responsible for the excellence of the work. He has under his command two youths who lay on, and one who takes off. The layers-on have to adjust each sheet by pin-holes on to little pins to get the exact register, otherwise we might have the pink of "Little Mrs. Gamp's" cheek slip on to her nose, and other strange pranks.

Here let the reader dismiss any preconceived notions of rattling off thousands per hour, as is ordinarily done with printing from type. Engravings, either in black or colour, must have a fair time to get a good clean impression, and the machine has yet to be made that can print well at a speed above eight or nine hundred an hour. The printer has to watch each sheet with the eye of an artist, see that it is printed the proper strength, and to throw out any faulty impressions.

At length the impression is taken to another machine, exactly the same routine goes on as for the first colour, again to the third, and so on to the fourteenth.

In the mean time authors and compositors have not been idle; and other machines are now in readiness to receive the sheets of coloured pictures which require printing at the back. This printing of the letter-press

PRINTING THE ORDINARY WEEKLY ISSUE OF "THE GRAPHIC"



COLOUR PRINTING BY ELECTRIC LIGHT

can be done at a quicker speed, and the sheets are then taken to the folding-room

THE STORE ROOM

The folding machine is such a dear little winning, fascinating instrument, that once you set eyes on it in motion, you will be rooted to the spot, and there remain open-mouthed until some kind friend leads you away. Though small, it has an enormous appetite, and it is fed on one side by a man with an open sheet of the number, another side by another sheet, and, as if this were not enough at once, a third man artfully contrives to introduce the cover or wrapper. Nothing daunted, the machine snatches at all three, folds them into four or two as wanted, puts each of them into their proper place in the cover, and delivers them as fast as your pulse beats.

We are naturally rather proud of these machines, as *The Graphic* was the first to apply them to a newspaper, and so deliver clean copies in a cover to the news-agents, who before had papers delivered to them in open quires, and had to fold them at home, in the streets, or wherever they could find space, much to the disfigurement and soiling of the paper.

The Christmas Number having been printed, packed in quires, and handed over to the publisher, his troubles now begin. He has over half-a-million copies, representing a total cost of about Twenty-one Thousand pounds, and he does not quite know whether public favour will leave him with forty or fifty thousand on his hands, or whether the demand will so largely exceed his supply that he will lay himself open to numbers of actions at law and claims for damages (as happened on a former occasion) from exasperated newsagents, who have taken orders which, through no fault of theirs, they cannot supply.

On the morning of publication—the whole trade having previously paid for the quantities they require—the publishing office is besieged by eager messengers from wholesale houses, and by the retail dealer, anxious for the stroke of the clock announcing the opening of the "list." The roadway and adjacent streets are closely packed with vehicles of every description, from the two-horse van to the common costermonger's barrow, and the services of the police are needed to regulate the traffic without, and to keep in check the more turbulent spirits within. The "list" having been opened, each house is taken in its alphabetical order, and their collectors served, whether it be with the modest single quire, or four thousand quires. Hastening with their burdens at full speed to their respective offices, all is hurry and bustle to catch the first train with the parcels, which they in turn distribute to their country customers, and they again to the public, every one's anxiety being to be first. As our American cousins display the same impatience, arrangements are now made by which *The Graphic* Christmas Number is published at the same hour both in England and *in every American State*, and most of the Colonies. Thus the continuous labour of nearly twelve months is dispersed in a few hours, and we begin to think of Christmas, 1883.

It has been the fashion for the Press writer to preserve strictly his *incognito*, but the public take a keen interest in Art and artists, and like to peep behind the curtain, for the "Interviewer" nowadays cannot be long denied.

The portrait group on the first page of this Supplement was drawn for an American magazine, and we quote from the article accompanying it, entitled "Journalistic London:"—

"The two principal objects of the originator of *The Graphic* were, not to confine the illustrations, as had hitherto largely been the case in illustrated papers, to a special staff of draughtsmen on wood, but to welcome any artist of talent, no matter what medium he used, the result being that he obtained the assistance of such accomplished painters as Luke Fildes, Herkomer, Frank Holl, Mrs. Butler (Miss Elizabeth Thompson), Miss Paterson (now Mrs. Allingham), E. J. Gregory, W. Small, Charles Green, Henry Woods, Sydney Hall, and many others of note. Secondly, the conductors were not satisfied to fill their pages with mere news and sub-editorial work; they arranged with eminent literary men of the day to write original essays and stories, Anthony Trollope, Victor Hugo, Wilkie Collins, Tom Taylor, Charles Reade, Mrs. Oliphant, James Payn, Messrs. Besant and Rice, the late Grenville Murray, George Macdonald, Edwin Arnold, George Meredith, and Mrs. Frances Eleanor Trollope having been among the contributors."

The Graphic, when strong enough to walk alone, rented one house, and began to print with six machines. Now there are three large buildings, containing twenty printing machines, invented by our master printer (besides ten machines constantly employed by us outside), illuminated with the electric light by the Metropolitan Brush Company's lamps of 2,000 candle power (nominal), worked by means of a dynamo-machine on their premises near the Victoria Embankment. There are also telephonic communication with four departments, another building devoted to electrotyping and stereotyping, and one now in course of erection to contain the new dynamo-electric machine, and two more printing machines driven by gas engines.

We may also mention that we have a School of Wood Engraving, now established for upwards of a year (there being a great scarcity of good engravers), the students showing much promise.

A few plain figures may be considered interesting. Counting artists, authors, papermakers, printers, &c., we calculate that *The Graphic* employs about a thousand people, that the annual outlay is over one hundred and twenty thousand pounds, the weight of paper used a thousand tons, and if you were to lay it down in sheets, and walk on it, at the rate of three miles an hour, and start on Christmas day, you would come to an end of your *Graphic* walk on the 22nd of November, that is if you were to walk for twelve hours daily; or, to put the matter in another way, the sheets of paper used by *The Graphic* in one year, if laid side by side, would reach just half round the world.

THE FOLDING ROOM

PUBLISHING THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER IN MILFORD LANE

We should like to whisper before parting our intentions for the coming year. Your steadily increasing appreciation of our efforts will enable us to increase the quantity and quality of our illustrations and articles. Among our illustrations we propose to continue *The Graphic* Types of Beauty, and, by the way, to those who have not tried it, we recommend nothing prettier for a room, hall, or staircase than these engravings after such accomplished artists as Sir F. Leighton, Alma Tadema, Frank Dicksee, and others, neatly framed in inexpensive black and gold frames. We intend also to issue a series of engravings, some in colour, others in black and white, from pictures specially painted for us by the foremost animal painters. Each artist has chosen his own subject, and the exhibition will comprise works by Briton Rivière, R.A., Mrs. Butler (Miss E. Thompson), S. E. Waller, R. Caton Woodville, C. Green, A. De Neuville, Paul Meyerheim, in fact all the leading artists here and abroad who paint animal life, or are in the habit of introducing animals effectively in their pictures. (This Exhibition is now open to the public at the Fine Art Society's Gallery, 148, New Bond Street, W.)

We have also in course of execution a series of portraits in colours of the leading living celebrities of the day. These will be printed separately, and finished very highly, so that they can be bound together and made into a handsome useful volume of reference. Our readers will be pleased to hear that our old friend Randolph Caldecott has in contemplation for us a series of sketches entitled "Passing Facts and Flying Fancies." Facsimiles will be produced in our pages every few weeks.

Our Editor has many new plans which cannot now be divulged, but to those who approve our series of stories it will be welcome news that we have made arrangements with the following authors, who have works in preparation:—Mrs. F. A. Trollope, W. E. Norris, author of "No New Thing," F. Anstey, author of "Vice Versa," Walter Besant, Hawley Smart, and Thomas Hardy.

We are fairly exhausted with blowing our own trumpet, and must now conclude wishing you all—

"NEW YEAR'S DAY IN OLD NEW YORK"

FROM THE PICTURE BY G. H. BOUGHTON, A.R.A.

circumstances into the background, and to shine in a reflected light. Miley had consulted his neighbours as to what should be done in this important crisis of his life, and they had all agreed to give him a helping hand, and to lend him some useful article, in order that he might appear a man of property.

There is nothing the lower class of Irish enjoy so much as outwitting some one: there is a peculiar relish in it, they take to acting a part as if to the manner born, and are never so well pleased as when they are "letting on" to be something which they actually are not. So, in Miley's case he found that borrowing was the easiest thing in the world. There was a keen competition among his friends as to who should come forward on this occasion with the handsomest offering. To out-wit a canny Northern farmer, what could be a greater triumph than that? The Widow Brien generously volunteered the loan of her four best milch cows. There was her shock-headed boy driving them into the field, with a broad grin on his face as if he thoroughly enjoyed the sport. After him followed two heifers from Tim Malone, a sow with a family of young pigs from Biddy Scanlan, six turkeys from Jemmy Delany, a flock of ducks and a couple of laying hens from the Widow Maguire, a horse and foal from her big son, the horse-trainer, and two asses from Mick Lanigan across the big meadow. Offerings of another description also poured in plentifully. Here was Katie Gorman with a flitch of bacon, Betty Bourke with a "lob" of butter, and Mary Malone with a dozen of fresh eggs and a noggin of whisky snugly concealed under her apron. Miley greeted every new arrival with a volley of blessings and thanks.

"More power to you, Mrs. Scanlon! More power to you, Mick! Sure, I'd do the same for all of yez, so I would. Only let me get the wife, and, begor! I'll pay you all back for this turn, never fear!"

As for the ten children, they had all been packed off to the bog-meadow with strict injunctions not to "dar" to show their faces till nightfall. Miley then proceeded to wash his hands and face, and to put on a borrowed suit of clothes. Katie Gorman, not to be outdone in good nature by any one, had volunteered to act as cook on this momentous occasion, and she was now busy over the turf fire boiling the fat bacon and greens which were to serve as the *pièce de resistance* on Miley's table, when he entertained his future relations at their midday meal.

"And Katie, agra," said Miley, as he vainly tried to comb out the shaggy locks that hung over his eyes, "don't take it amiss if I spake up a little sharp to you, because, you know, for this day you must let on to be my sarvint girl."

Katie grinned acquiescence. "You may spake as sharp as you like, Miley," she answered, "while *they* are to the fore, but I'll have it out with you another time, as sure as I stand here."

Miley made no response to this sportive sally, he was too much engaged in a tussle with the matted locks of his bushy hair.

"By garrows, man!" observed Katie, "you'll niver get the wife if they see your head that away. It looks for all the warld like a bewitched barley-stack. What were you doin' at all?"

"Sure, it was at the fair of Ballagh—last Thursday was a week—that Tim Scanlan and Jemmy Delany pitched me into a wet ditch, and I drunk, and there I lay till mornin' without a stir on me, and I niver could get a rack (comb) through my head ever since."

"Will I run across the Lime-Kiln Meadow," suggested Katie, "and get Foxy Fremy? He's goin' the rounds shaving and hair cutting, and I'll bring him to you in less than no time."

"Well, do, Katie, like a good girl." So Katie ran away at full speed.

At the same time, unpleasant thoughts crossed Miley's mind of the sixpence that Foxy Fremy would infallibly extort, perhaps, also, a noggin of whisky, and then, he was secret agent of the Land League, and would certainly remind Miley of his duties in that respect. However, the thing was done. In five minutes Katie returned with Foxy Fremy in tow, a fiery little man, red-headed, red-bearded, and red-faced.

"Now, Miley," he exclaimed, as he brandished a pair of scissors over Miley's dishevelled locks, "now, Miley, I'll make a transubstantiation of your head! The mother that bore you wouldn't know her son. Sure, no woman would marry you with——"

"Ah! wait a bit," sighed Miley, pathetically. "I'm all in a thrimble when I think that Sibby's father and brother 'll be here just now, and may be they'll find out about the borrowed things."

"Not they," cried Foxy, who knew the state of affairs as well as Miley himself, "you have them too well blinded. The neighbours have stood to you powerful, so they have, and they'll niver tell on you, not they! But whin you get the wife and the fortin', Miley, don't forget the two shillin's a week to the Land League."

"*Two shillin's!* You said *one* shillin' was enough."

"Two shillins', Miley, don't be drawin' back. Didn't we promise to pay you six shillin's a week if you were turned out?"

"But I niver got it," said Miley, ruefully.

"Bekase you stayed on, and paid no rint. You *would* have got it, and that's the same thing. Don't be a turncoat, Miley, or it'll be the worse for you."

"Can't you lave me alone?" said Miley, wriggling on his three-legged stool. "I haven't got the wife or the fortin' yet, and God knows if I may iver get them. I wish the day was well over without your bothering at me."

"I wish I was as sure of heaven as you are of Sibby Quin this minute."

But Miley sighed. His *rôle* now was to be dispirited as to his prospects, and doleful as to his purse.

"I hope I'll have good luck," he said; "but it's a bad thing to be counting your chickens afore they're hatched. If I lose Sibby there's nothing for me or the childre but the poor house. And now, Foxy, that you've done, be off with you like a streak of lightnin', for if ould Mr. Quin saw you, there'd be wigs on the green, and no mistake. He'd smell the Land League off you, as sure as you're alive."

Foxy would fain have remained to see the sport, but Miley was inexorable, so after the fee of sixpence and a glass of whisky, the Land League agent was dismissed, and strolled across the fields to other customers. Miley's preparations were now complete. Outside, his farm presented an unusual air of plenty and prosperity. Horses neighed, geese cackled, cattle browsed, cocks crew, and any one who contemplated the field in which his cabin was situated would have pronounced the owner to be a "warm" man, and a good match for any girl. But then such superficial observers could not possibly have guessed that all these signs of prosperity were borrowed plumes.

II.

PRECISELY at 12.30 Sibby Quin's father, a big, brawny, broad-shouldered farmer, with a strong Northern accent, might have been seen wending his way down the boreen which led to Miley's residence. Quin the elder was duly followed by Quin the younger, a ferret-faced lad of nineteen, with a sharp nose and thin lips. Both father and son looked thoroughly wide-awake, and sharp enough for anything.

But neither the one nor the other was a match for Miley, who now appeared at his own door, his lazy eyes lit up with a temporary gleam of satisfaction and avidity.

"Arrah! Mr. Quin, but I'm proud to see you. Here's a sate, man, come and take an air of the fire, for the wind do be mighty cowld and sharp these winter mornin's."

Miley assiduously got a chair (borrowed) for his future father-in-law, and Mr. Quin seated himself, took off his hat, wiped his brows with a red cotton handkerchief, and gazed attentively around.

"This seems a nate little place you've got here, Miley. Fine rich feeding ground. No wonder your cows are fat."

"They are, indeed, thank God!" promptly replied Miley; "as fat as butther."

"But you must be mighty lonesome here all by yourself, without chick or child, in the winter nights."

"Faith! I am that, Mr. Quin, and no mistake. It's I that'll be glad of a wife like Sibby to brighten up the place a bit."

"It's Sibby that can do that; her tongue goes like the clapper of a mill. You've quiet dacent neighbours, I hope?"

"Couldn't be better or quieter, we niver have a word."

"No Land Leaguers?"

"Is it Land Leaguers?" (Miley well knew that it would not answer to "let on" about his connection with the League to his future relations.) "Ne'er a one at all."

"No murders? No outrages?"

"Sorra one. There's not a gun in the place except an ould one that Tim Malone has when he does be committing murder and sooicide among the birds."

"We heard a very different story coming along on the train."

"Ah! don't b'leeve them allegations, Mr. Quin. It's all lies they do be telling about us; we're honest sober men in these parts that mind our own business, and never interfere with e'er a one."

"But, I thought," persisted Tom Quin, "that they were regular out-and-outers about Ballagh."

"Not at all, not at all," answered Miley. "Don't pay attention to what them ould peelers do be telling you. It's thim as do all the mischief."

"I know one thing," said Mr. Quin, striking his stick into the floor, "that no Land Leaguer——"

"It's better not to be talkin'," whispered Miley, peeping slily out of the door. "We don't know who might be listening, and then there might be murder for all I could tell."

"Sure you needn't be afraid, when all your neighbours are so quiet and dacent as you say they are."

"Whisht! whisht! They're quiet enough, but it's not safe, I tell you, to be wagging your tongue too free. There was a man carded not two miles from this dure, because he was mad for talk, and I'd be long sorry, Mr. Quin, to see grief or trouble come on you or Tom, and you strangers in these parts."

Thus warned, Mr. Quin changed the conversation.

"That's a fine stapping servant lass you've got, Miley."

Here Kate grinned complacently.

"She is, indeed, God bless her! Many a fine 'lob' of butter she makes for me, and I get first price for it at Ballagh market. A sarvint is all very well, Mr. Quin, but it's a *wife* I do be wanting (a sigh) to keep things straight."

"Well! you'll soon have one, please God. We'd better be taking a look at the stock. Them seems fine young strippers you have out there, Miley."

"They are, the Lord be praised!" devoutly responded Miley. "They is worth 15*l.* apiece, if they're worth a penny. "But we'll have a bit to eat afore we go out. Katie, look alive with the dinner. It's little you do for your wages; idling about instead of minding your work, and I with company to the fore."

Thus exhorted, Katie proceeded to dish the bacon and greens, which were not only flanked by a bowl of potatoes, but also by a bottle of whiskey.

The viands being finished, some hot punch further added to Mr. Quin's good humour, and when he strolled through Miley's fields and duly inspected his borrowed stock, he pronounced himself perfectly satisfied with his daughter's suitor, and the wedding-day was fixed for the following Shrove Tuesday. As this was only a fortnight off, Miley's spirits rose to the highest pitch; the summit of his ambition—a wife with a fortin"—was now fairly in his grasp. It was with a good deal of "letting on" that he had attained his end. The Quins would have been rather astonished if they could have glanced in at Miley's abode on the evening after their visit. All the ten children had returned, begrimed with dirt, and were squatted round the fire in various picturesque and unpicturesque attitudes. Miley presided at the rickety table, and assisted his neighbours to despatch the remnants of the eatables and drinkables which they had brought in for the entertainment of the visitors. Among the loud voices of the boisterous guests Miley's was pre-eminent, and he joined lustily in a chorus which ran as follows:—

> Come, boys, now let your spirits mingle,
> And ever, while you live,
> Be sure to say you're single!

It certainly was a good thing that the Quins, father and son, were out of sight and hearing, and fairly on their way back to the County Armagh.

III.

SHROVE-TUESDAY came, and with it Miley Mellachin's wedding. Everything went on well; the Quins gave a splendid marriage-feast; Sibby was in first-rate humour; but, better than all, Miley grasped in his hand the 200*l.*!

And now came the bringing home of the bride. Mr. and Mrs. Mellachin arrived at Anascragh at an early hour, between eleven and twelve A.M. There was no borrowed stock to be seen now, and the place looked terribly empty and bare on that dull bleak March day, with a cutting easterly wind sweeping along the bog. The black stagnant pool beside the cabin,—the door hanging on one hinge,—the feeble turf fire, all spoke of poverty rather than wealth. Mrs. Mellachin began to feel the cares of matrimony pressing upon her. She looked around with an eye to various improvements which she had devised as she jolted along from Ballagh in the low-backed car. But how was this? Where were the cows, the horses, the pigs, the geese, the turkeys, &c., of which she had heard such glowing accounts from her father? In vain did she strain her eyes, no such animals were in view. A very lean goat, bleating despondently, was all the live stock that could be seen. Poor Sibby's face visibly fell. Miley had prudently taken himself off; so she sat down on a stool before the fire, and wondered what would come next.

Presently, a very small child, with a little wizened face, stole through the open door and crouched over the fire, glancing askance at Sibby all the time.

"G'along out of that!" cried the bride, whose temper was now tried to the uttermost. "G'along out of that, this minute, I say, you impudent spalpeen! and don't dare to show your face here."

Little Miley (the youngest of the ten) put his blue knuckles up to his red eyes, and gave vent to a series of feeble sobs, amongst which the words "home" and "dada" were distinctly audible.

"Go home, then, with you to your dada," quoth angry Sibby, giving the child a vigorous push. "You'll have no home here, I can tell you."

Just at this crisis Miley appeared at the door; and the child eagerly rushed at him, and, bobbing his rough head against the paternal knees, roared "dada, dada!" with the full strength of his lungs.

"Do you mean for to tell me," cried Sibby, trying to be calm, "that that there grimy fellow is your child?"

"To be sure I do," answered Miley coolly. "Did you niver hear I was married afore?"

"Niver! You niver told me."

"You niver asked me."

"How could I? Sure, I niver thought about it."

"Then, why didn't you? You needn't be turnin' the poor child out of doors, he's *my* child, and this is his home, so there!"

"I hope there's no more of them," said Sibby, suspiciously. But Miley observed a strict silence, and took out his pipe for a quiet smoke.

Next day another small figure presented itself at the door.

"Be off out of that!" cried the bride. "One child's enough, the Lord knows, and we want no more in this house. G'along with you, I say, g'along."

But the new comer would not be driven away. He edged over to the fire and put his dirty hand into that of little Miley, who hailed him with a yell of delight. "Sure, he's my brother," screamed Miley, junior. "Sure, it's little Mike, and there's more of us behind that hay rick."

"How many more?" asked Sibby, fiercely. But the two schemers said nothing, for their instructions had been not to "let on" about their number yet, but to keep silence till the unpleasant fact had slowly dawned on the mind of their new stepmother.

On the third day, a little girl, Mary Bawn, made her appearance just at dinner time; on the fourth day, Eileen Dhu; on the fifth day, the twins, Joseph and Daniel; on the sixth day, another girl; on the seventh day, two very ragged boys; and, on the eighth day, big Larry, making, altogether, ten living souls who now stood around the astonished Sibby. There they were, all tattered and torn, drawn up in a long line, beginning at tall Larry and ending with the two-year-old baby. Every one to be fed, clothed, and schooled out of the new wife's "fortin'." It was an awful revelation.

"Are them all yours?" asked the luckless bride, turning to Miley, who had just come home from the fair at Ballagh, and evidently had a "drop taken."

"They are," he answered, defiantly, "every one. Long life to the whole of them!"

Poor Sibby crouched down on a straw boss, buried her face in her apron, and burst into a torrent of sobs. "Holy Virgin! look down on me this day," she cried. "One 'ud think I was in an orphan asylum. Let me out of this," she exclaimed, starting up. "Not a bit of me 'll stay here a minute longer. Let me go, I say, let me go!"

"Arrah, woman, don't be giving yourself airs," exclaimed Miley. "It's a quare thing if a man mayn't have a thrifle of childre."

"Childre, indeed! If ye had as many cows as ye had childre it 'ud be a blessing."

"What harm in life do the poor childre do you?"

"Harm! What will I do wid them at all? It 'ud take pounds and pounds to put yellow male in the mouths all the year, let alone new milk, and there's not a sup of that in this misfortunate hole you've brought me to."

"Sure, haven't I got your fortin'?"

"It's not to rear another woman's childre that I want my fortin' to go. Fd niver, niver have had you if I'd known you was a widdy man; but you knew that, you did, you did, you black deaver, you!"

"Ah! don't he botherin' me," said Miley. "Sure, wasn't I married to the first woman (God rest her soul!) fair and dacent afore the priest, in Ballagh Chapel, and a better wife niver stood in shoe leather."

"I'm sure I wish you had her back again," sobbed Sibby. "I've had enough (God knows) of your borryin' ways. You've ne'er a cow to your name, and nothing to spake of but a parcel of hungry childre. Oh! wasn't I a big fool to get married to you at all?"

"Sure we're going to have the land for the people," observed Miley, consequentially, "and then I'll be an estated man myself."

"G'along out of that," was Sibby's response. "When you get *that*, pigs may fly."

Sibby, like a wise woman, now sat down and confronted the difficulties of her position. Like a certain modern statesman, she had three courses open to her:

(1) To return to her parents, and leave Miley and his family to their own devices.

(2) To struggle on as best she could at Anascragh.

(3) To emigrate at once to America before the precious 200*l.* were quite frittered away.

Sibby, having Northern blood in her veins, and being an energetic bustling woman, with a good deal of conscientiousness, chose the third course.

She first administered to Miley a scolding long and loud. Having thoroughly cowed him, she got possession of the remainder of her fortune, paid off Miley's debts, refused to have anything to do with the Land League, and took the passage of the whole family for New York. As the formidable party sailed out of Queenstown Harbour, and felt the first qualms of sea-sickness, Sibby darted a furious glance at her bridegroom, gave him a fierce dig with her elbow, and muttered, "Get out of that. Sure, if we're all kilt we've only you to thank for it; you and your borrowed plumes."

But Miley prudently "let on" as if he heard not, and continued lazily smoking his pipe. So the shores of his native land faded away in the blue distance.

Mr. Woosey's Great Trouble

By F. W. ROBINSON,

Author of "Grandfather's Money," "Poor Zeph," "No Church," &c.

I.

WASHINGTON WOOSEY was my particular friend until business parted us, and Woosey went to China to represent the firm of which he and his father Joseph—generally known in the trade as "Wire-drawn Woosey," on account of his excessive slimness—were partners in conjunction with Peddington ("Cocky Peddington"), and Scratcher. They were all mixed up with tea somehow, or sold mixed teas in enormous quantities, and had various China matters eternally on hand, and which were always weighing on their mighty minds. The firm of Peddington, Scratcher, Woosey, and Woosey was known all over Mincing Lane and down portions of St. Mary Axe and Leadenhall Street, as a great China house, and people thought a lot of it, at least people in the same street did.

I was a poor scribbler on the top floor of John Street, Bedford Row, when Washington Woosey went away to China; he had been taken into partnership six months before, and, after the rule of the establishment as regarded junior partners, had to be shipped abroad like a bale of goods to take his seasoning at Hong Kong, there to remain until summoned back years afterwards to Mincing Lane, unless killed by brandy and soda meanwhile in the Celestial Empire. Washington and I had been schoolfellows together; he had been a rich man's son, and I had been the son of a poor tradesman who had fought hard to put me in a good school and keep me there till fit for Life's battles. Life's battledores would have been a better term, considering how I was knocked to and fro whilst trying to earn my living—a living by the pen, that is, and

when a poor devil is not "in the swim," one may guess what kind of struggle it is. "At all events it is an honest calling," I remember saying one day to Woosey when *he* attempted to disparage it, "and that's more than you can say for all the China houses possibly."

Washington Woosey did not say anything for China houses—which he probably thought stood upon their own merits for foundations, and soared away storeys above any sneers of mine. Washington had the laugh on his side, for he was rich already, and bound to get richer—there was nobody to stop him. He gave a princely dinner at his club—a farewell dinner before starting for China—and he did me the honour to invite me as a guest. There were twenty-five of us, besides his father the Wiredrawn, Peddington, and Scratcher, and the dinner was a blaze of splendour. Old Woosey, who is nothing if not vulgar, assured me confidentially that ten pounds per head would hardly cover it, but Washington liked to do the thing in style. And certainly this was style—the style of the City—at which only a few disagreeable fellows like myself shrugged their shoulders and laughed.

It was a good dinner, and then the curtain dropped on the London life of Woosey Junior,—on all his life for the matter of that, for the world seemed to know him no more. He never wrote to me from China; I never met a man who had seen him or heard from him; the wholesale house existed in Mincing Lane as usual, but even of that I was unaware, and I went my own way in life, wondering now and then what had become of Woosey, but taking no trouble to find him out, as he had taken no trouble to find me. So people drift at times, worse luck.

I was a man with twelve children when we met again. I had married and settled the year after his dinner-party—settled down to hard work and a large family, to hard struggles and general "hard lines"—to little successes, and once very nearly to a big one—to an easy-going, indigent, happy-go-lucky, devil-may-care existence, with nothing on my mind but a few bills, and with so many good friends to make my heart light in my own home, that I was very seldom out of it.

* * * * * * * * *

I was fifty-five years of age when Woosey surprised me by his appearance at Peckham, and stared at me open-mouthed. Woosey was fifty-seven then.

"How fat you've got!" was his first exclamation.

"I have been laughing and growing fat since we met last," I replied.

"You must feel very uncomfortable," said Woosey, who looked as if he had not laughed since his dinner-party thirty-three years ago, and, great heavens! how thin and yellow he was!

"No—I feel pretty well," I answered.

"Ah, you haven't been knocking about the world as I have," he said, with a groan. "All kinds of temperatures and complaints—from black-spot fever to the spring-heeled ague. You have been taking it easily, Thompson."

"Oh, yes, very easily," I said, dryly, in reply.

"I have had an awful trouble to find you," he said, "but I came across your name in a newspaper, and that put me in mind of you at once. 'I'll find him out,' I said; 'I should just like to ask *his* advice. He was a fellow with an odd lot of notions when I saw him last,' and so I went round to your publishers, and here I am."

"And in what way can I be of service to you?" I asked, not too warmly, for I feared Woosey might want something put into print, some puff of himself, or his family, or his firm; and yet his manner was hardly that of a man who sought a favour, or thought that he deserved one.

"I'll tell you in a minute," he said, as he sat down in the one comfortable chair I had in my study—my first-floor back, with a fine view of eight-and-thirty back gardens, all twenty feet long by sixteen wide—and left me the corner of my book-littered table to sit on.

"Pray don't hurry. Are you short of breath?"

"A little."

"Can I offer you anything?"

"No thank you. Let us talk this matter over *soberly*," he said, as though that would be a change for me, and please him better.

"All right. When you're ready."

I was a little nettled with Woosey, he was so thoroughly saturated with himself and his mission. It did not seem possible that a man like him could be in search of advice or consolation, he seemed so immeasurably above anything of the kind. He was so interested in himself, that there was not a scrap of interest left for me and my career. He did not ask me if I were married—he was not anxious to know what I had been doing all the days of my life. There was a new book of my own in three bright crimson volumes on the table at his elbow, and it did not suggest that I was the author of it, or even attract his notice.

As he sat in my big chair staring at the fire, he was the very picture of misery—a thin, sallow, shrivelled American biffin of a man, whose superfine clothes did not fit him, and whose thin claw-like hands had a restless habit of going up and down his knees as if he was smoothing himself out. His hair was grey, and stood bolt upright upon his head, his eyebrows were eccentric, and ran all ways in streaks of wire, his face was thin, and as full of wrinkles as a monkey's.

"You see before you, Thompson, one of the most miserable fellows in the world," he said at last.

"I am sorry to hear it—but I don't believe it," I said, frankly.

"Why not?"

"You have a splendid business, and a splendid income from it with which to enjoy life."

"I hate business. I don't enjoy life," he answered, "and my splendid income is the curse of it all."

"Indeed."

"I am too rich—money is eating me up."

"Poor fellow."

"Ah! you may treat the matter ironically—everybody treats the matter ironically," he exclaimed. "There is not a living soul who will regard the matter seriously."

"Well, let us be serious, then. Why should money trouble you in this dreadful way?"

"Because I don't know what to do with it, and can't get any pleasure out of it. Because it comes rolling in, and there's the horror of investing it, of putting it out to interest, or something for the benefit of a crowd of heirs and successors whom I heartily despise."

"Yours is a singular complaint, Woosey."

"Is there anything more dreadful?" he inquired, passionately.

"Well, yes—one or two things."

"What is the use of my being a millionaire? for"—with a whisper of horror in my ear, "I am a millionaire! I haven't a wife and family other people's families I am not likely to trouble my head about, to be rewarded by their black ingratitude. I am not fond of display, I hate company, I abhor extravagance, and yet I am burdened with all this money, and with my fools of solicitors running after me to know what to do with it."

"I can't advise you," I said.

I was not interested in this extraordinary trouble—my private impression was that Woosey was "doing the humble," or going out of his mind.

"Yes, you can," he replied. "You're about the only one who wouldn't laugh at me, and who might suggest some way of getting rid of this infernal money."

"Oh! you want to get rid of it?"

"Yes—most of it. But not in an insane fashion which would lead people to think I ought to be locked up," he said, ruefully. "I don't want any of that nonsense."

"Why don't you speculate in the business?"

"I'm not in the tea now. I was paid out—two hundred thousand pounds in one lump, and nowhere to put it. Oh Lord!" he sighed forth. "You did not know I had retired from business?"

"No."

"When I came back from China twenty years ago——"

"Twenty years?" I said, quietly. "Oh! you have been back twenty years?"

"Exactly. My father died about that time, and left me three-quarters of a million; but I stuck to the business just the same. I wanted occupation, for this brain; idleness would have killed me; Peddington was always having fits, and Scratcher had lost the use of his arms. The business was on my hands entirely, and so I stuck to Mincing Lane till fresh partners turned up, and it flourished all the time I was head of it, and money came pouring in like a beastly flood."

"I hope you trebled all the clerks' salaries?"

"No, I did not, sir," he answered sharply. "There is such a law as supply and demand, Thompson, and I was bound to respect it. If any man can get good, sound, clever clerks at one hundred pounds a year each, he would upset the whole commercial fabric by giving them one hundred and fifty."

"Then I'm hanged if I wouldn't upset the commercial fabric."

"Ah, that's like you," he said, shaking his head; "you do not understand how one's hands are tied by commerce. You have wild ideas—you are a revolutionist, and radical, and rabid; but," with a corpse-candle kind of gleam in his eyes, "you are the very man I want now. For I'm getting desperate myself—I will not be driven frantic with all this wretched capital—I must get rid of it."

"It does not seem a difficult operation."

"But it is very difficult."

"Why did not you come to me fifteen or ten years ago? I should have been glad to see you," I said a little bitterly.

"I have been so busy, Thompson," he pleaded; "you cannot imagine how dreadfully busy I have been. But what would you advise?"

"Can't you build an institution for toothless old clerks, whom the laws of supply and demand have left dying by the roadside, or when they have died, can't you found an orphanage for their destitute children?" I suggested.

"God bless me! no. I don't want to be worried with architects and directors and secretaries, and votes of thanks, and laying first stones, and silver trowels. I'm not fond of charities or institutions, or anything of the sort. I've not a scrap of sympathy in me."

"I suppose not."

"I should have thought you might have had a better idea than that," replied. "Why I read in a paper a few days ago—and that put me in mind of you, as I have said—that your article was utterly fallacious, completely marred by the wildest and most extravagant ideas."

"Oh! you take in the *Stiletto* do you?" I said savagely; "no wonder you're so dreadfully yellow."

"And your ideas are of the most commonplace description," he added. "Any one can think of orphanages and institutions for nasty complaints."

"Why don't you erect a statue?"

"Erect a statue—to whom?"

"To yourself. A big statue—with a canopy."

"Yes, that's all very well; but how can I do that?" he said thoughtfully.

"Oh, you must keep in the background; get a heap of friends into a committee, and send in subscriptions to yourself from various anonymous admirers. That's how it's generally done."

"It's not at all a bad notion," he said more complacently; "and it might be made to mop up a lot of money. But—won't people ask what a statue is erected to me for?"

"Yes—they'll do that."

"And then there's those cussed comic papers—they're sure to be making fun of the whole thing."

"Yes—they'll have their fling at you; and the bigger the statue, the more easily they can hit it."

"Then what did you recommend a statue for?"

"So that it hits your fancy, what does it matter what else is hit?"

"No, it won't do," he said with a half sigh. "I've done a lot for the tea trade; but nobody seems to care about that. And I don't remember on the spur of the moment that I have done anything else."

"Perhaps you haven't."

"No, I really don't think I have."

"Done to a T! wouldn't have been a bad inscription on the base of the statue."

"I don't care about jokes," he said dismally. "I see the point of them, but I don't care about them. This is not a joke to me. Upon my honour, Thompson, I take no interest in life. I might as well be a jelly fish."

"It's no use recommending you a good, high stepping, extravagant wife, I suppose?"

"Not in the least," he said severely.

"You would have excitement for your money."

"Don't mention it."

"Well, try horse racing, or build a theatre, or an opera house, or put up as a Conservative for a big Liberal borough, or get your money into five thousand pound notes and pitch them in a neat little bundle over London Bridge—there you are."

To my surprise Washington Woosey rose solemnly, and shook me by both hands.

"Thank you, Thompson, very much," he said; "I think I see my way to following some of your ideas. Good-bye, I hope I shall run against you shortly."

And with these words he went out of the study and down stairs into the hall, where four of my smallest urchins were playing with his hat and umbrella, which he had left behind him there, as though he had meant to stop all day.

"You are married, I see," he said with a sickly smile, as he took his hat and umbrella from the young ones.

"Oh yes."

"I'm sorry to hear it, Thompson," he added, as he dragged his way into the street.

That seemed the end of Washington Woosey, as far as my existence was concerned. I never thought to see him again. I did not want to see a man who had professed to be my friend; who had been twenty years within a stone's throw of me, and taken no trouble to renew my acquaintance. "He is rich, and miserable, and mad, and I wouldn't change places with him for all his money," I said to my wife that evening, when we were deliberating as to how much longer we could possibly let our trusting butcher's bill run.

"If Mr. Woosey had only thought how much good one or two of his thousands would have done us," Mrs. Thompson remarked.

"We will try and do without them," I said carelessly, but I had thought of that little matter myself, whilst Woosey was bemoaning his hard fate. But Woosey did not want to be troubled by grateful people and showers of thanks—forgetting that people who borrow money are never grateful.

The next time I met Washington Woosey it was at Epsom races—the last place at which I should have expected to shake him by the hand. There was a great change in him; he was no longer the yellow-faced, miserable man whom I had seen last at Peckham. I do not know that there was anything particularly festive in his actual looks, but his dress and demeanour were absolutely "gay." He wore a light zephyr coat; he had a white hat with a long green veil fluttering in the breeze; he had primrose kid gloves, and a gold headed cane, and there was a horse-shoe of diamonds blazing in his sky-blue scarf. "I should not have dreamed of seeing you here," I said to him.

"Why not? I can afford to come," he answered, very quickly.

"Oh, yes, and you can afford the time too, now," I replied, a little nettled; "but it did not strike me that horse-racing was your forte, or that you were likely to get any enjoyment out of it."

"I don't expect that. Do you?"

"I'm on business."

"Eh?"

"I'm the descriptive reporter for the *Grand Stand Newspaper*, and all my expenses are paid."

"Do you know anything about the race this year, then?" he asked eagerly.

"I think so. What do you want to know?"

"Which is—now—the very worst horse in the whole pack of them?" he inquired in a confidential whisper.

I looked at him. I remembered our conversation of a few months back.

"You wouldn't be so foolish as to——"

"Hush. Don't make a noise. It's an easy way of getting rid of some of *it*," he said huskily. "It was your own idea, Thompson."

"They will think you are really mad."

"No; they mustn't do that," he answered thoughtfully. "I'm sane enough, goodness knows. Well, which is the horse that it would not be quite unreasonable to back—to take the odds upon, I think it is called."

"There's Smiler—thirty-six to one; it isn't likely she will win. Smiler is a roarer, they say."

"Smiler is Aurora. I don't understand, but still thank you for the information. Do you bet?"

"No; I cannot afford it. I am content with a simple sweepstakes."

"I thought you might like to lay me thirty-six to one against Smiler—in thousands?"

"No, thank you; there's no telling what may happen, although it's my opinion that it is the worst horse in the field."

"Then why don't back your opinion? I'd rather you win than anybody else."

"Thank you; but I haven't the thousands, Woosey," I said.

"But you'll find plenty of betting men in the ring, over there."

"Oh! over there, thank you. I shall bet with everybody who disputes Smiler's capacity."

And with a grin of sudden and awful meaning he disappeared into the midst of the crowd, leaving me in great doubt whether riches had *not* turned his brain, and if it would not be advisable to communicate with his friends. He was on my mind, and so was the great race, and the horse Smiler, for I had drawn it myself in a ten-shilling sweepstake for 40*l*., and sold it for two-and-sixpence in disgust.

And Smiler won the race! The rank outsider. The horse which nobody took into account, the roarer, outstripped all competitors but one, and that one fell within five yards of the winning post, and let Smiler dash by him triumphantly. There were shrieks of applause, shouts of triumph, groans of execration, joyous looks, black looks, looks of utter despair, and amongst the latter, I shall not forget those of Washington Woosey, whom I met on the platform of the railway station, a few hours afterwards, surrounded by noisy friends, who were shaking him by the hand, and slapping him on the back. He caught my eye and glanced at me; presently he came to me, and hissed in my ear,

"Why did you recommend me to back Smiler?"

"I thought it would lose the race, but I did not recommend you to back anything."

"You must have had private information. Have you made much out of it yourself?" he asked satirically.

"No. I have lost seven-and-sixpence," which was the balance of deficit on my sweepstake after deducting two-and-sixpence in hand.

"God knows what I have won," he groaned forth, smiting his forehead, "hundreds of thousands, I am afraid, and everybody thinking that the jockey and I are in collusion. I never knew a jockey in my life. Thompson, your abominable want of judgment has ruined my character for life. From this time forth we are strangers."

And away marched Washington Woosey, and I was not sorry to be quit of him.

During the next two years, I only once crossed the path of my unfortunate friend, and that was in the Strand where he saw me, and feigned to take an interest in a filter shop, until I had passed him. After that he came to the front again, and I heard, not greatly to my surprise perhaps, that he was at the back of the new colossal speculation of the Jumbo Theatre, with the Jumbo Restaurant, Public Gardens, Billiard Rooms, Circulating Library, and Universal Co-operative Store in one grand combination.

"The fool will ruin himself," said Splash to me—Splash, who was a successful manager of a theatre himself, thanks to the "gilded youth" in the stalls, and the painted youth—feminine gender—on the stage; "what does he know about a theatre?"

"Nothing."

"Then he'll make a nice mess of it."

"That is just what he's trying to do," I answered, and Splash laughed, and thought I was sarcastic, which I was not.

Woosey was carrying out another of my suggestions, it was evident, and this time surely there would come an opportunity for him to thank me with all his heart. He had made Claypole manager, a man of many failures, and who had never been able to manage anything creditably for himself, and he had signed with Miss S. Tick, the emotional actress, for two hundred pounds a week, with a minimum engagement for three years.

Yes—this would certainly be a failure. Miss S. Tick was clever, but not popular. She could not draw a crowd—she never had attracted anything but demands for orders. And Woosey or Claypole had been foolish enough to accept a play from a wretched novelist, who knew nothing of stage effects, and relied upon original situations, and strong dialogue, and plot, and had not stolen anything from the French. And the result was "*A tremendous success*," as Claypole announced in advertisements half-a-mile long, with Augustus Claypole in large capitals in every second line. And the success of the theatre called attention to the Restaurant, Public Gardens, Billiard Rooms, Circulating Library, and Co-operative Store, all of which became the rage. The comedy was praised by everybody, seen by everybody, and Miss S. Tick was the fashion, and to be seen in every attitude that was at all becoming—and in every costume, in every stationer's and photographer's shop in London. Places were booked six months in advance, and "the luck" of the new venture was the talk of the United Kingdom.

Washington Woosey told me this eighteen months afterwards, when he had sold out in disgust, and there were thirty thousand pounds made over for his share of the profits. He had come to me again then. In sheer despair, or from the notion that I might be of service to him, or from a hidden motive which I did not care to fathom, Woosey once more put in an appearance at my Peckham domicile.

"I don't bear any malice, Thompson," he said, quite humbly, "I forgive you everything. I begin to see it was not all your fault."

"UGLY AUNTIE"

"LOVELY AUNTIE"

FROM THE PAINTINGS BY MISS MARY L. COW

"HUNGRY BIRDS"

FROM THE PICTURE BY CARL [illegible]

"Well, that's very kind of you."

"You can't rely upon every chance," he added; "there's no such thing in the world as a dead certainty."

"Only at the undertaker's."

"Thompson, I have observed before that you are much too frivolous for your years," he said; "your remarks jar upon me dreadfully."

"Can I be of any use to you now?"

"Yes—I think you can—I'm sure you can. That suggestion of yours about contesting a Liberal borough in the Conservative interest is really a stroke of genius. I have been thinking it over—the Jingo Club and the St. Ananias will support me with their influence, and at the worst I shall be an M.P."

"At the worst, yes."

"And if I fail or succeed I shall have got rid of a great many thousands of pounds."

"I'm sure you will."

"Then write me an address to the enlightened electors of Radsborough, and I'll pay you handsomely for it. There will be a dissolution of the Ministry before the year is out, and I want to be ready."

"Nothing like being in good time."

"And half-a-dozen long speeches—say a dozen at the same price. I shall be able to learn them by heart. I have a most remarkable memory. Thank God," he added fervently, "that I am possessed of all my faculties."

I had my doubts about *all* of them, but I did not wish to depress him by mentioning my doubts.

"I don't much like the job," I said, hesitatingly, "as I am very busy just now."

"For the sake of old times, Thompson."

"I know a better man than I who will do this sort of thing *con amore*. He's a born Conservative, too—I'm not."

"Will he write better than you?"

"Of course he will."

"Then engage him at once, please—we cannot begin too soon."

I engaged old Jack Earthworm, a valuable member of the press, who wrote for every respectable journal, and could put twenty per cent. more telling things in a paragraph than any newspaper man in the trade. So the matter was settled, and Washington Woosey bided his time.

And it came. The Ministry resigned, the Parliament was dissolved, and floods of English eloquence and Billingsgate eloquence deluged the land. Washington Woosey put up for Radsborough as the Conservative candidate. He spent more money on bills and bill-stickers than had been known before in bill-sticking history; he engaged all the public houses, and threw the Liberal member and his friends remorselessly into coffee shops; he reduced the poor rates by employing all the paupers in Radsborough as sandwich men; the comic singers at the music halls were heavily bribed to run down Liberal politics in their pot-house effusions, and though they were hooted and pelted nightly, they sang their hardest for a generous benefactor; he or his agents imported fighting men from other districts to disturb the Liberal member by smashing up the forms and making frantic charges at the platform; he became even an expense to the War Department of Her Majesty's Government, who were always anticipating a riot, and ordering out the military; he enlisted the electric light into his service, and held a meeting at every theatre; he shook the confidence of the Liberal party by his dash, and display, and barefaced bribery, and his speeches were considered by the Conservatives as masterpieces of abuse of everybody who was not of his particular way of thinking.

Then came the result, and it was as I had anticipated, and I am not quite certain that he was as delighted as he appeared to be. Washington Woosey lost the election by nine hundred and twenty-four votes, and there was much exultation and no little drinking amongst the free and independent Liberal voters.

"I have got rid of some money at last, Thompson," he said to me.

"Yes, I should think it was a success."

"Of course as the money was to go, I should not have greatly objected to winning the election, but they were people of no taste at Radsborough, and it does not matter in the least."

"I am glad of that."

"I shall petition against the return of Frowsy—that's a duty, and it will increase the expenses materially."

"Exactly. Of course you'll lose the day."

"I haven't a doubt about it."

Washington Woosey petitioned, and lost the case, as had been prophesied, despite the assistance of a very expensive barrister or two; and I was thinking he had attained the height of his ambition, and had dissipated a few of his thousands, when once more he rushed down to Peckham, convulsed with emotion and looking as white as a ghost. He held a letter in his trembling hands.

"Look here, Thompson. Look here—see what the wretches have done now!" he exclaimed.

I read the letter which he had thrust in my hands. It was from the Secretary of the Jingo Club, and ran as follows:—

"JINGO CLUB, W.,
"*April 1st, 18—.*

"DEAR SIR,—

"At a meeting of the Conservative party, yesterday afternoon, it was proposed by Lord Stonehenge, and seconded by Sir Staffington Northpole, and carried unanimously, that the hearty thanks of the party are due to your chivalrous contest for Radsborough, and that as a slight tribute to the energy and ability displayed by you during the conduct of the election, it has been decided that the whole expenses of the contest shall be borne by the members of the Jingo Club. With this object your agents have been instructed to submit all the accounts forthwith to me. With every consideration of esteem,

"Believe me,
"Yours very faithfully,
"SEPTIMUS BLUE."

"What an honour!" I exclaimed.

"What a nuisance!"

"I had no idea you Jingoes loved each other so ardently as this," I added.

"Oh, it's terrible."

"But you are not compelled to accept this proposition."

"That's the worst of it. Yes, I am. I shall offend Lord Stonehenge, who's terrible when his blood is up, if I decline the honour."

"Offend him, then. What does it matter?"

"N—no, I can't do that," he said, mournfully; "I may go in for Parliamentary distinction again, you see. It's a distraction; it gives me something to do; it stems the tide of democracy, I am told—I don't know how, but it does—and at all events I must get rid of some money that way, only," with a sigh, "it's a long while to wait for the next election."

"You have been very fortunate—unfortunate, I should say," I remarked.

"Yes, not a penny gone yet—and getting richer than ever. Shark, of the Stock Exchange, has telegraphed to-day to tell me that it was a gold mine I sank thirty thousand in last week, and that shares are now at a hundred premium. Fancy, even a mine—an old, used-up, pumped-out Nevada swindle—striking into another vein of precious metal."

"You have been very badly treated in this world, Woosey."

"It is not everybody would say that as heartily as you do," he replied; "and I thank you very much for your sympathy. I have tried almost all your ideas, and they are not a bit of use. Your ideas generally are failures, I fancy."

"Well—generally," I confessed.

"I have thought of the bundle of notes and the bridge, but that's despair."

"Yes; I wouldn't advise that now."

"Somebody would find the money and bring it back to me, and I should have all the trouble for nothing, besides a heap of fellows talking about my mental condition."

"People will talk."

"I must bear the burden and the heat of the day, and all that sort of thing, I suppose," he said with a sigh. "Well—can you advise anything else?"

"Start a daily paper, and make me editor," I said, perhaps with a little extra throbbing of my heart,—who knows?

"It might be a success."

"The chances are against it."

"Yes—with you for the editor, I should think so," he replied, not too politely, and I felt very much disposed to kick Washington on the spot—on any spot. "But, oh! if there should be a demand for the paper, the awful profits that would come in, Thompson!"

"We would try and put up with them."

"I'll consider the matter. And, now—how are *you* getting on in world?"

It was the first gleam of interest in my welfare he had exhibited. I was pleased.

"Oh! pretty badly," I answered with a laugh, "but I must not complain. I have plenty of work, and twelve children to work for."

"Do you save any money?"

"No; I don't."

"You ought. You're getting old—you're looking bloated, I don't think you're very careful with your health or your capital. This is too big a house to keep up for a man in your position. I don't see what you want with all those books. You can't read them."

"They are some of the best friends I have—don't run them down, Woosey."

"Oh, it's nothing to me. Good day."

"Good day."

"I will drop you a line about the newspaper idea," he said.

"It must not be a Conservative organ, understand."

"Then it may succeed," said Woosey, quietly.

"I should not regret the success myself."

"And you wouldn't do your worst?" he inquired, suspiciously.

"Certainly not."

"Would you allow the history of myself to run through some twenty numbers?" was the next suggestion.

"That would certainly check any tendency towards an upward sale, I fancy," I replied, after a moment's deliberation.

"Oh! would it? Good morning, Thompson."

"Good morning, Woosey."

I never saw him again, but he kept his word, and "dropped me a line." And this is the line he dropped.

"DEAR THOMPSON,—

"Fate is too much for me. I shall struggle no more. I am now completely RESIGNED.

"Yours truly,
"WASHINGTON WOOSEY."

Our Illustrations

MR. OAKBALL'S WINTER IN FLORENCE

This series of pictures is described by the artist, Mr. Randolph Caldecott.

PREPARING FOR THE CHILDREN'S PARTY

However old we may be, we all of us recollect, more or less vividly, the first children's party to which we were invited. If of a shy temperament, we looked forward with some dread to the coming festivities, particularly if we had not learned to dance. This observation especially applies to the male sex, who in their early years are frequently devoid of any feelings of chivalry towards their fair little companions. Small boys are apt to regard dancing with a sort of Oriental contempt, as something only fit for girls, and to congregate in corners, solemnly discussing school-reminiscences, or criticising the pantomimes which they have visited, only waking up to liveliness when supper is announced. When a boy can dance, and dance well, he is in great request. Hence the advantage of the previous tuition of a *maestro*, such as is depicted in Mr. Leslie's picture. Thus forearmed, our two little heroines (or their modern representatives) will plunge into the mazy waltz with smiling and graceful confidence.

CHRISTMAS MORNING AT MOTHER'S BEDROOM DOOR

Christmas mornings are sure to be dark, and are very often cold, nevertheless the children are pretty certain to be awake, and dressed (if nurse will allow them) long before the sluggish December sun sheds his faint beams on the chilly world. Older people are wont to be less lively; Christmas Day is not such a delightful novelty to them as to their offspring, nevertheless let us hope that Mamma, who was probably fully aware overnight (as Mammas are wont to be) of the juvenile programme, is, if not fully dressed, at least up, and in an ornamental dishabille. The object of the young folks in M. Marie's picture is apparently not so much to give, as to show what they have themselves got. And here again, at any rate with the little ones, Mamma will display that delightful maternal hypocrisy referred to above. She knows all about those toys, when they were bought, where they were bought, and how much they cost, but she will (if a true mamma) display the most extraordinary surprise, so that each recipient will think his or her gift all the more charming, because Mamma regards it with such fresh and innocent wonderment.

CHRISTMAS MORNING—DECORATING THE SIGN-BOARD

Judging from the costumes, this incident happened in the benighted days before Good Templars and Blue Ribbon Armies were invented. Let us not be hard on our forefathers; tea and coffee were costly rarities; aerated waters were non-existent; malt liquor, small or strong, according to age and class, was the universal beverage. Then there were more of those pictorial swing signboards than are to be seen nowadays. Anyhow, the incident makes a very pretty picture. In the original, probably, the boar's head was less artistically depicted than it is by Mr. Yeend King. Judging from the half-obliterated signs of this sort which one sees in sequestered villages, the artists who painted them were rarely unrecognised Snyderses or Hendekooters, for their works are usually of a highly conventional type.

NEW YEAR'S DAY IN OLD NEW YORK

Compared with Damascus or Rome, nay, even with Paris or London, New York is a mere tyro of a city; yet, on the other hand, by the side of Chicago, San Francisco, or Melbourne, it can boast of quite a respectable antiquity, seeing that it is now some two centuries old. But the New York (or perhaps we should rather say the New Amsterdam) of the seventeenth century was a very quiet, innocent little town compared to the giant which now sprawls over Manhattan Island, and which has parts of its gigantic limbs in Long Island and New Jersey. We can scarcely realise that such an idyllic scene as that represented by Mr. Boughton took place in a region where there are now miles of roaring thoroughfares, tramcars innumerable, and elevated railway locomotives screeching overhead. If a modern descendant of the Knickerbockers were to venture on such a chaste salute in broad daylight in Fifth Avenue, he would speedily have a crowd round him offering sarcastic congratulations, and perhaps an enterprising artist would sketch the incident on his shirt-cuff, and publish it in the columns of our namesake, the *New York Daily Graphic*.

UGLY AUNTIE AND LOVELY AUNTIE

Children who have young aunts don't half appreciate their youthfulness. It is a great advantage to have aunts young enough to be not far removed themselves from childhood. They romp and play in an unaffected way which oldsters may strive to imitate, but to which they cannot attain. The writer of these lines would have always thought this aunt of Miss Gow's lovely, even if she had given him something nasty in a spoon. Being the youngest son of a youngest son, his ideal aunt was an elderly lady with frosty hair. The youngest of his aunt-tribe was, in his earliest acquaintance with her, verging on forty. Let us start a Society for providing families thus painfully situated with youthful and charming aunts.

HUNGRY BIRDS

This is as it should be; the unfeathered bipeds who are warm and cosy within have not forgotten the feathered bipeds who are shivering without. The ground is hard with frost and covered with snow, berries are scarce, and so Robin Redbreast comes and taps with his beak at the window-pane. He is not proud; though partial to worms, when he can get them, he will eat most things which Christians eat, and, indeed, a good deal which they leave. Give him and his mates a dish of broken victuals, and they are, figuratively speaking, in clover.

MAMMA'S CHRISTMAS PRESENT A BOY AT LAST

Our first thought, at the sight of Mr. Yeames' charming picture is, Oh! how dreadfully he will be petted! The girls will all want to nurse him at once, and when he grows old enough to run about, they will strive to anticipate his every wish. Unless the parents are very sensible, the odds are that in such a case he will grow up a selfish brute, and perhaps years hence will squander his sisters' patrimony, and reduce them to misery. Let us hope for better things. Let us hope that he will be sent as soon as he is old enough to a good school, where he will learn that he is not the only boy in the world, and where, if he shows an overbearing spirit, some judicious senior will speedily take the "stuffing" out of him by administering a sound whopping.

AFTER THE BALL—COMPARING PROGRAMMES

The campaign is over—the battle has been fought, weapons, in the shape of gloves, fans, and bouquets, are thrown aside—and the warriors sit down side by side to talk over their conquests. Well, perhaps this is too high-flown a way of putting it. Somehow, the old-fashioned word "conquest," as regards the love-victories of young ladies, has rather dropped out of the vocabulary of a cynical, self-conscious generation. If we could hide behind the sofa, and listen to the prattle of Miss Blonde and Miss Brunette, we should hear a great deal of criticism, no doubt, of our noble selves; innocent, but rather merciless fun would be made of our little weaknesses and peculiarities; and even the praise would be tempered with severity, as, for example, when the best waltzer in the room is condemned for the inanity of his conversation. Possibly, however, now that dancing men are reported to be scarce, these young ladies are less inclined to criticise than to compare notes with a view of discovering which of the two has been able to secure most of the available terpsichorean male talent. For even pretty girls, owing to the non-dancing affectation of many of our modern youths, are sometimes condemned nowadays to the penalties of "wall-flowerism."

THE CHRISTMAS DINNER IN DANGER

From the point of view of a canine *gourmand* there is something very appetising under that dish cover, for it affects the dog as valerian affects cats, and it seems to be odds whether the dinner will reach home safely. Only fancy, if she should stumble in the snow, or trip on a treacherous slide! Everything would vanish in a few moments down their hungry throats, and the expectant family at home would have to be content, like the poor Irishman, with potatoes and "point."

AT THE EVELINA HOSPITAL

Thanks to the kindness of friends this little girl may have a happy, if not a merry, Christmas. No romping about, or sight-seeing, or hearty eating for her, but nevertheless this abundant supply of toys will assuredly beguile the weariness of pain and weakness. We cannot see whether the adjacent beds are equally well furnished; if not, she will, if a nice little girl, gain an additional gratification by lending some of her treasures to her afflicted neighbours.

"LITTLE MRS. GAMP"

Dickens could not have foreseen, when he depicted that immortal hireling nurse of Kingsgate Street, High Holborn, that her gouty umbrella with a lively green patch let in at the top would make such an impression on the popular mind. For many years past, umbrellas of the heavy gingham pattern have been styled "Gamps," indeed the name has been extended to umbrellas of all kinds, and we remember some years ago that a clever serial story was published, entitled the "Rape of the Gamp." Fortified by these precedents, Mr. Millais boldly styles this chubby Miss "Little Mrs. Gamp," on the strength of her being possessed of a rain-shelter of the Kingsgate Street type.

A NEW STORY,

By MRS. FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE,

ENTITLED

"*LIKE SHIPS UPON THE SEA*,"

Illustrated by SYDNEY PRIOR HALL,

Will begin in THE GRAPHIC of January 6, 1883, and be continued weekly until finished.

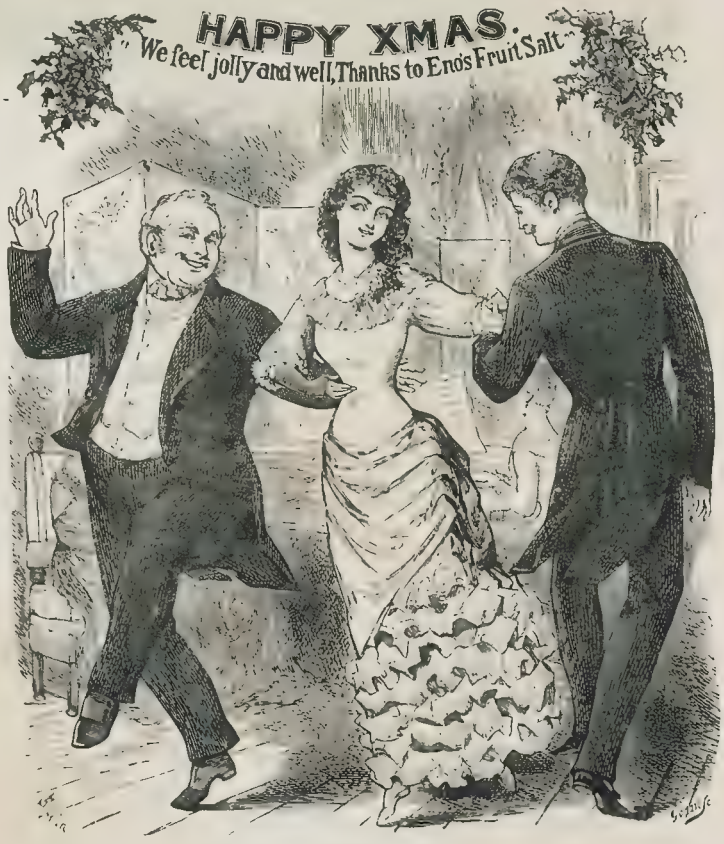
190, STRAND.

PEACE, REST, AND HAPPINESS

"IT'S NO IN TITLES NOR IN RANK;
IT'S NO IN WEALTH LIKE LON'ON BANK,
TO PURCHASE PEACE AND REST;
IT'S NO IN MAKING MUCKLE MAIR;
IT'S NO IN BOOKS; IT'S NO IN LEAR,
TO MAKE US TRULY BLEST;
IF HAPPINESS HAE NOT HER SEAT,
AND CENTRE IN THE BREAST,
WE MAY BE WISE, OR RICH, OR GREAT,
BUT NEVER CAN BE BLEST."—BURNS.

THE FESTIVE SEASON

How to enjoy good food, which otherwise disorders the digestive organs, causing bilious headaches and impure blood, use ENO'S FRUIT SALT. Also as a refreshing, cooling, and invigorating beverage, use ENO'S FRUIT SALT. It is the best preventitive and cure for biliousness, sick headache, skin eruptions, impure blood, pimples on the face, giddiness, feverishness, mental depression, want of appetite, sourness of the stomach, vomiting, thirst, &c., and a means to remove the effects of errors of eating and drinking.



THE FESTIVE SEAS

Experience shows that mild ales, port wine, sherries, sweet char liqueurs, and brandies, apt to disagree, while white wines, and g whiskey largely diluted soda-water, will be fou least objectionable. FRUIT SALT is par adapted for any const weakness of the liv possesses the power of tion when digestion ha disturbed or lost, and the invalid on the righ to health. A world is avoided by those wi and use ENO'S FRUIT therefore no family shou be without it.

HAPPINESS.—WHAT HIGHER FORM OF HAPPINESS CAN WE ATTAIN THAN CONQUEST OVER HUMAN PAIN?

IN 1871 CHARLES KINGSLEY writes:—"Let our hearts be bowed as the heart of one man, to say that, so far as we have power, so help us God, no man, woman, or child in Britain, be he prince or beggar, shall henceforth die of preventible disease. Let us repent of and amend the scandalous neglect of the well-known laws of health and cleanliness, which destroys thousands of lives yearly in this kingdom without need or reason, in defiance alike of science, and humanity, and of Christian profession. Two hundred thousand persons, I am told, have died of preventible fever since the Prince Consort's death, a few years ago. Is not that a national sin to bow our hearts as the heart of one man? Oh, if his Royal Highness's foul and needless disease, by striking at once at the very highest, shall bring home to us the often-told, seldom heeded fact, that this same disease is striking *perpetually* at hundreds among the very lowest, whom we leave to sicken and die in dens unfit for men, unfit for dogs; if this illness shall awaken all loyal citizens to demand and enforce as a duty to their Sovereign, their country, and their God, a sanitary reform in town and country, immediate, wholesale, imperative; if it shall awaken the ministers of religion, to preach that—I hardly doubt it—till there is not a fever alley or a malarious ditch left in any British city, then indeed this fair and precious life will not have been imperilled in vain, and generations yet unborn will bless the memory of a Prince who sickened as poor men sicken, and all but died as poor men die, that his example, and it may be hereafter his exertions, might deliver the poor from dirt, disease, and death."

WITH each Bottle of ENO'S FRUIT SALT is wrapped Illustrated Sheets, showing the best means of stamping out Infectious Diseases, Fevers, BLOOD POISONS, &c. If this invaluable information was universally carried out, many forms of disease now producing such havoc would cease to exist, as Plague, Leprosy, &c., have done, when the true cause has become known.

ENO'S FRUIT SALT. "After suffering for nearly two and a half years from severe headache and disordered stomach, and after trying almost everything, and spending much money without finding any benefit, I was recommended by a friend to try ENO'S FRUIT SALT, and before I had finished one bottle I found it doing me a great deal of good, and now I am restored to my usual health; and others I know that have tried it have not enjoyed such good health for years.—Yours most truly, ROBERT HUMPHREYS, Post Office, Barrasford."

IF its great value in keeping the body in health were universally known, no family would be without a supply. In many forms of Fever, or at the commencement of any fever, ENO'S FRUIT SALT acts as a specific. No one can have a simpler or more efficient remedy; by its use the poison is thrown off and the blood restored to its healthy condition. I used my Fruit Salt freely in my last attack of fever, and I have every reason to say it saved my life.—J. C. ENO, Fruit Salt Works, Hatcham, S.E.

NEW GUINEA.—"How I wished I had a dozen bottles of ENO'S FRUIT SALT. It is the best medicine I have ever had, and the most refreshing drink I have yet tried."—*Explorations by Rev. J. Chalmers, London Missionary Society.*

PREPARED ONLY AT ENO'S FRUIT SALT WORKS, HATCHAM, S.E., BY J. C. ENO'S PATENT.

JEOPARDY OF LIFE.—THE GREAT DANGER OF DELAY. After suffer FEVER FOUR TIMES, in each attack with very great severity—in fact three of them coulc been more dangerous or crit l—from a very extensive and careful observation, extending over a forty years, I am perfectly satisfied with the "true cause" of fever is a disordered condition of The office of the liver is to cleanse the blood, as a scavenger might sweep the streets. When t not working properly, a quantity of waste or effete matter is left floating in the blood. Un circumstances, should the poison germ of fever be absorbed, then the disease results; on the cont one whose liver and other organs are in a normal condition may be subjected to precisely the same as to the contagious influence, and yet escape the fever. This being the case, the importance of k liver in order cannot be over-estimated; and I have pleasure in directing attention to my FRUI which in the form of a pleasant beverage will correct the action of the liver, and thus pr many **disastrous consequences**; not only as an efficient means of **warding off fev malarious diseases**, but as a **remedy for, and preventitive of, bilious or sick he constipation, vomiting, thirst, errors of eating and drinking, skin eruptions, g heartburn, &c.**

ZULULAND AND CETEWAYO.—"'I know what it is,' he answered; 'this made from euphorbia flowers, which are very poisonous.' This explanation made me feel e uncomfortable, but I elicited from him that there was not much danger, as the 'maas' taken wit neutralise the effect of the poison. Directly he mentioned poison I dived into the packs and pu bottle of **ENO'S FRUIT SALT**, and, emptying a quantity into two pannikins, filled then water, and several times repeating the dose, in a few hours we were considerably better."—*Zu Cetewayo* (p. 139), by CAPTAIN W. R. LUDLOW, 1st Battalion R.V. Royal Warwickshire Regim

"WHAT ON EARTH SHALL I TAKE TO ZULULAND?" asked my friend at I replied, "If you take my advice—and it's that of an old traveller you'll not budge wi bottles of **ENO**, even if you leave half your kit behind. I am never without these salts, and pigs, I never intend to be." On his return, I inquired, "Well, how about **ENO'S FRUIT** "My dear fellow, it was the best bit of advice you ever gave; they saved me many an illness; a left Tugela I sold the remaining bottles for ten times the original price!"—Extract from my LIEUTENANT-COLONEL.

SUCCESS IN LIFE.—"A new invention is brought before the public, and success. A score of abominable imitations are immediately introduced by the unscrupulou copying the original closely enough to deceive the public, and yet not so exactly as to infringe rights, exercise an ingenuity that, employed in an original channel, could not fail to secure rep profit."—ADAMS.

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"MAMMA'S CHRISTMAS PRESENT: A BOY AT LAST"

FROM THE PICTURE BY W. F. YEAMES, R.A.

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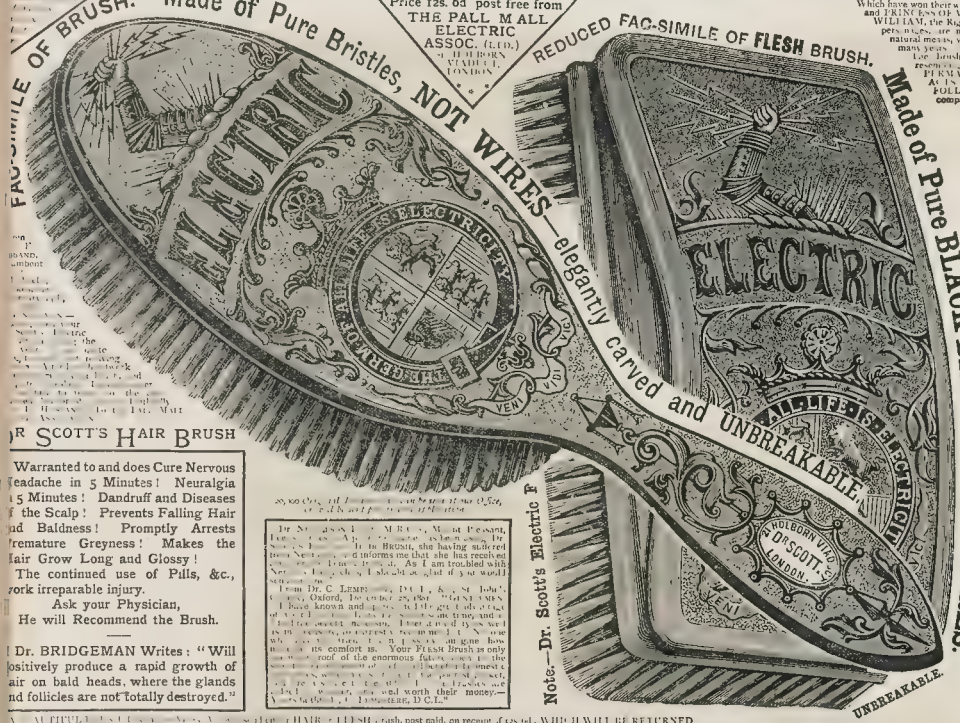

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Which have won their way to ROYAL FAVOUR when so many other PRINCE, and PRINCESS OF WALES, the KING OF HOLLAND, EMPEROR FREDERICK WILLIAM, the Right Hon. W. E. GLADSTONE, and other Royal and eminent persons, are now brought to the notice of the public. They are by natural means, will always do good, never harm, and are a strength-giving for many years. They should be used daily. Each of the rows of bristles in the Flesh Brush back is made of a new UNBREAKABLE material resembling whalebone, a combination of various plastics, PRODUCING A PERMANENT ELECTRO-MAGNETIC CURRENT, WHICH ACTS IMMEDIATELY UPON THE HAIR GLANDS AND FOLLICLES. This power can always be tested by a silver compass which accompanies each Brush.

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TESTIMONIALS.

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I prescribe it for many of my patients with the best results. Its use is highly recommended.

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For some time past I have suffered from rheumatism in the knee. I have tried many remedies but have found none so effective as your Brush. I have used it for a short time, and I am happy to say that I am entirely free from pain. I have also had several cases of Neuralgia and Rheumatism brought under my notice, which have come back, and they have used the Brush and found it a most valuable remedy. I have also had several cases of Paralysis, and I have found it to be a most valuable remedy. I have also had several cases of Rheumatism, and I have found it to be a most valuable remedy. I have also had several cases of Neuralgia, and I have found it to be a most valuable remedy.

Yours truly, JESSE M. HARE

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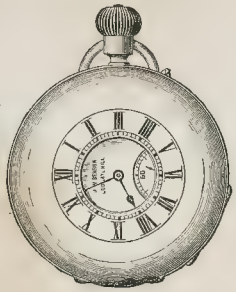

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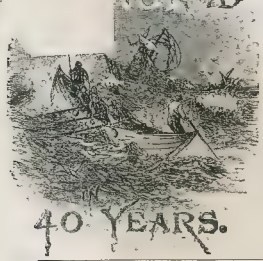

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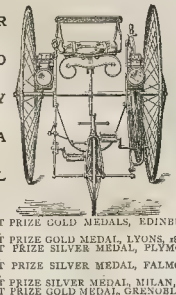

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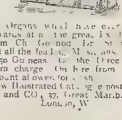

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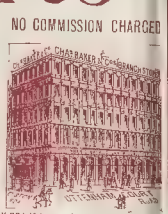

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